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A N

Important Inquiry;

Or, the NATURE of a

Church Reformation

FULLY CONSIDERED:

Wherein is shown,

From *Scripture, Reason, and Antiquity,*

THAT THE

Late *pretended* REFORMATION

Was groundless in the ATTEMPT, and
defective in the EXECUTION.

Revised and Corrected, with ample Additions, and an

A P P E N D I X

Concerning COMMUNION *under One Kind;*

In the Whole composing a Body of all the ma-
terial Points of CONTROVERSY.

The SECOND EDITION,

— Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.

LUKE, c. xix. v. 22.

— Thou hast been poised in the ballance, and art found
short of weight,

DAN. c. v.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year MDCC LVIII.

AN

Important Inquiry

BX

1780

R247c

1758

Church of England

FULLY CONSIDERED

Wherein is shown

From the History of the Church

THAT THE

late proposed REFORMATION

Was grounded in the Attempt, and

designed in the Execution

By the Council, and some other persons

APPENDIX

Containing COMMUNION with the Church

In the Whole consisting of a Body of the most

learned Divines of Great Britain

and the most judicious of the Clergy

THE SECOND EDITION

With many Additions, and a new Preface

— Out of this can be seen with a

little more than

— That the late proposed REFORMATION

was

L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year MDCCLXXX



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A N

Account of the present EDITION.

* I *
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N venturing to send the following Essay, a second time abroad, I beg leave to acquaint my courteous reader, that I have not barely confined myself to the amendments, it may have wanted, but have also endeavoured to give it some improvements, by throwing in several material additions into the body of the work, and by annexing an appendix at the close of it, which in the whole, makes a kind of compleat system of controversy.

IN my first undertaking, I had canvassed all the fundamental points concerning faith, in regard to which there is any controversy subsisting between the Protestant and Catholic Churches, and which indeed, being fully settled, might, I humbly apprehend, be sufficient to put an end to all disputes between us and them. However, there being, also, a point of discipline about Communion under one Kind, to which many make as great a demur, as to the controverted articles of faith; I have therefore in the Appendix thoroughly handled that subject. I have transiently therein, as it fell in pertinently to my subject, touched professedly on some points, and in the close of the controversy have laid down some general rules and principles, as an explanation and vindication of all the other practices of the Catholic Church,

b

x An Account of the present EDITION.

Church, and its whole system of discipline. As all these, no doubt, stand upon the same bottom; the rules I shall offer will, I flatter myself, without entering into a minute and circumstantial discussion of each particular point, be found sufficient towards resolving any difficulties or objections, that can be made on those several heads, and prove satisfactory to every dispassionate and unprejudiced reader.

AT least, if the first edition of my poor endeavours for the service of my neighbour, in defence of the Catholic cause, divested of present improvements, was favourably received, I hope these will not be a means of rendering the Second Edition less acceptable.



T H E



T H E

P R E F A C E.

()* OLEMIC tracts are become so many
()* P and voluminous at this time o'day;
()* the subject has been so thoroughly dis-
cussed, and, in a manner, exhausted, that a fur-
ther attempt on the topic may be deemed an act
of temerity and presumption: but I conceive it to
be with books as it is in regard to diet; and se-
veral essays on a subject, like different cookeries
of the same meat for different palates; what is
unfavorable to one man's taste may relish with ano-
ther's, and a writing which is not agreeable to
this person's way of thinking may sympathize with
mine, and from thence will affect and please; not
for that it is better than what had been wrote be-
fore, but because it seems, as it were, to be my
own.

Upon this hazard I venture to trouble the
Public with a few reflections on the old and
trite subject of the pretended Reformation, hope-
ing they may have the chance to coincide with
the thoughts of some one else. If they meet
with this good fortune, and are of service to any
one, I shall have attained my aim, and the sum-
mit of my ambition.

Now, as often as I have ruminated on that memorable event, the pretended Reformation, which has been the cause of so great divisions in Christendom within these two centuries and a half, it has always appeared to me, That an examination into this much-boasted performance, from the nature of the thing, according to the most simple and precise idea of it, would be the readiest way to trace its merits, and the most effectual towards terminating all our differences: I conceive that the point to be duly considered and thoroughly weighed in this matter is, The natural purport or meaning of a Church Reformation; what exigency there was of one at the time the pretended Reformation was put up, and how that work has answered this simple idea and the supposed exigency: for, if the Church could and did stand in need of a reform at that epoch of time, and if the Reformation attempted has answered that end to all intents and purposes, it then, no doubt, carries with it its own merit, and every one must be to blame who does not come into it heartily and sincerely.

But, if it be proved that the pretence for the late Reformation was vain, and the end, which should have been proposed by it, unanswered; or in a word, that it was groundless in the attempt, and defective in the execution; then the abettors of it ought to renounce their pretensions to this arrogated, unmerited title, and should return back to their Mother Church, from which they departed.

For, it is not the plausible name of a thing which should transport us into a precipitate persuasion of its being accompanied by merit. We see it often fall out in the most material events,

as well as in the common occurrences of life, that honorary names, take their rise from the most trifling incidents, or, at least, without any just recommendations to them. With respect to common life, it frequently happens that a military title accrues to a man, and adheres to him as long as he lives, from the meanest services: a quack in physic, and a mere pretender to the law, are indiscriminately complimented with denominations, which, in justice, are only due to the heads of their profession. So, in the case lying before us, there is not a sect ever so contemptible, and even exploded by the more rational part of the Reformation, but, as it derives its origin from the same cause, and is grounded on principles avowed by the whole body, in consequence thereto affects to be a member of it, and asserts its right to the pompous title. It is, therefore, merit alone that can call for our attention, or should, in any degree, influence our judgment.

The merits, then, of the Reformation, are what I presume to take upon me to inquire into in the following Sheets; and, in venturing on this undertaking, I beg leave to observe, That I have no particular National Church in my eye, any further than it may happen to dissent from us in the respective tenets which may hereafter come under our consideration; nor, strictly speaking, can I be said to attack the Reformation in general: the Authors of this Religious Revolution were the aggressors, by declaring war against us; or, rather, by revolting from their Mother Church: the abettors of it, ever since, keep open the breach, and support the quarrel; and therefore
so

so often as we may seem to impugn them, we, in fact, are only defending ourselves.

Besides, to consider this matter in another light, inasmuch as we might be glad (I speak *secundum hominem*, or according to the dictates of nature) to have our Religion square, as near as possible, with our temporal interests, and the inclinations of flesh and blood, by enjoying one without departing from the duties of the other, it certainly would highly concern us, in this respect, to be certified of the justice of the Reformation, and to be ascertained of the possibility of salvation within its precincts: For, temporal advantages, and the contentments of nature, are so evidently on the Reformers side, and the members of the Catholic Communion are kept at such a distance from them, that a man must be wholly blind to his own interest not to be inclined to give the former the preference, if he could do it with equal security to his eternal welfare. For who, for example, could be such a fool to profess himself, within these realms, a member of a Church which renders him obnoxious to the state, the object of general scorn and contempt, and lays him under numerous disadvantages prejudicial to his fortune, if motives of conscience did not retain him in it? Who, again, if his salvation could be insured to him in the Protestant Communion, which makes the road to Heaven level and easy, and throws all the thorny difficulties of Confession, Penance, and Mortification out of the way, would not readily come into it, rather than toil to the desired term thro' the craggy paths of innumerable self-denials

denials and painful injunctions imposed on the professors of the Catholic Faith? An examination therefore, into the merits of the Reformation, is, in fact, no more than a rational inquiry, whether it be safe to conform to it or no; or, at most, it is only setting forth our reasons why it appears to us not to be safe, and why we are held in the old Religion, which we assuredly believe to be the Mother Church, possessed of the primitive Faith established by CHRIST, propagated by the Apostles, and, by an invariable tradition, in an uninterrupted succession of lawful Pastors, handed down to us; and, by virtue of CHRIST's indefeasible promise to his Church, as we shall see hereafter) to continue the same to the end of the world. In a word, whatsoever I presume to offer on our behalf at present, or, whatsoever other Catholic controvertists have ever said in defence of the Church's doctrine, against it's reforming opponents, is no more than what we are enjoined to do by the first Vicar of JESUS CHRIST, and visible Head of his Church, St. Peter, who directs us — *to be always ready to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you.* 1 Pet. iii. 15.

I can't conclude this apology for my undertaking without adding a word concerning the method I have pursued in the management of my subject, which by some may, perhaps, be judged too loose and declamatory for a Polemic Essay: For this reason I had entertained some thoughts of dividing the following controversies into so many discourses; but since, without giving it this alteration,

tion, I flatter myself that I have, under it's present dress and character, kept close to the design of my work, and have conducted it thro' the whole with tolerable method, regularity, and perspicuity; I hope it may have the chance of not being disrelished as it is; and that it may, moreover, prove of service to my neighbour, in being edifying to him and instructive. If it be so-fortunate as to meet with this desirable success, it is a matter quite indifferent under what appellation it compasses it, whether as a Polemic Essay, or as Discourses. Religion itself comprises this double end, *Reformation* and *Information*, to *exhort* as well as to *instruct*; and the same ought to be every controvertist's aim; and therefore conviction is only one part of his task; for a sterile belief will avail nothing, since *the devils believe and tremble*. St. Jam. Ep. A belief operating by charity is a Christian belief.

To exhort then, as well as to instruct, is the plan I have had in view, and have endeavoured to follow. But, after we have done all that lies in our power, 'tis from Heaven we must expect the success we wish for; *Paul planted, Apolle watered, but GOD has given the increase*. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

It is, therefore, from the Divine Mercy, that I beg for myself and my reader the blessing we reciprocally have occasion for, *viz.* that what I have now undertaken for his sake may be of use to him, and that he may be favoured with the grace to make his advantage of it. *Amen.*



THE INTRODUCTION.

WHEN Luther rose in open rebellion against his Mother Church, and beat the drum to a general revolt; when, as he himself made a boast of, and the fact is not only confessed, but has been magnified into an act of the most heroic magnanimity by his adherents ever since, when, I say, he presumed to stand alone against the whole world, that is, against all the visible preexistent Churches upon earth, in order to model one by his own whims and fancies. The undertaking was so daring, that he was necessitated to look out for the most plausible pretences to give it the colour of a sanction, and to obtain it a tolerable reception from his own deluded proselytes. For though the temporal revenues of the Churches and their costly ornaments for divine service, through the indulgence of this new gospeller, abandoned to the discretionary plunder of avaricious statesmen and wicked princes; were such an agreeable bait as they readily swallowed, and were an effectual means of conciliating them to his interest; the
a wide

a wide field, opened to libertinism, flattered the passions of other dissolute men, and gained them easily to his party; yet the soberer part of mankind was to be brought over by some other stratagem; none more fit to impose on simple unwary minds, and the well-meaning sort of people, than a loud outcry against error and superstition, and a specious attempt upon a godly Reformation. The scheme no doubt, was plausible; but yet an old antiquated one, under a new name; a stale contrivance, practised by hereticks of every denomination, and of all ages, from the very birth of Christianity, who constantly affected to insinuate their errors under the cover of truth.

Truth is so amiable, that its greatest enemies, ashamed to appear in their own shape, would be thought to become its warmest advocates: and, indeed, a search after truth has always been the great business of human understanding, the proper employment of every rational man, and the duty of a Christian. But then, this search, to be serviceable, ought to be tempered with three essential qualities: it must be sincere, disinterested and dispassionate; for want of these requisite qualifications there are found many pretenders to truth, who deviate the widest from it, whilst interest is their bias, and passion their guide; and consequently their quest after it unsincere and unsuccessful. The most extravagant opinions that ever made their way into the world, and seized mens minds, were ushered in, and imposed upon them, under the colour and mask of truth.

This

This has been particularly notorious in the numerous religious innovations which have been made, from time to time, in matters of faith, the revealed truths.

Our Blessed Lord foretold that this would come to pass, that false Prophets would appear, and such as should dare give themselves out for CHRIST himself; and he forewarned his Disciples against the impostors, by whom even the just would be in danger of being deceived.

The Apostles, within their own days, saw their Blessed Master's prediction verified in some degree, and bewailed the consequences of it, the seduction of many deluded souls. But to come to particular and known instances; the Church was no sooner blessed with a respite from a general bloody persecution of above three hundred years duration, when the Devil, envious of its happiness; and jealous of its future increase under that repose, attempted to stem its progress; not any more by open violence, and by instigating its avowed and professed enemies against it, as before; but by fomenting intestine divisions, by raising false friends, and undutiful rebellious children, to disturb its peace. The prophet foreboded and rued the evil, many ages before, crying out, "*The sons of my mother have risen up against me.*" Cant. i. 6.

Arius was one of these concealed enemies, the instrument to the Devil's malice, and an unnatural son of the Church: he counterfeited a zeal

xx The INTRODUCTION.

for truth, in order to pave the way for error and seduction; he impugned the divinity of the Son of God, and his consubstantiality to his father, by impeaching the Catholic Doctrine of Sabellianism; and under this disguise obtruded his own blasphemies for the genuine faith of the Church.

In the ensuing century, Nestorius, copying the former arch-heretic's hypocrisy and profound dissimulation, affected to be no less a zealot for truth and a champion for the Church than the former, that he might insinuate, less suspected, his pestiferous errors against the incarnation, in asserting a diversity of persons in JESUS CHRIST, and render them the more plausible: and the Eutychians, upon the foot of this heresy, and under a pretended zeal of oppugning it, fell into the opposite extreme, by confounding the divine and human nature.

These instances, to omit many others, are sufficient to make good my assertion, That it has been the avowed and uniform conduct of Heretics, of every stamp, and of every age, to counterfeit a zeal for truth, as a means to facilitate their insinuating the most monstrous errors and absurdities; and therefore, as I further observed to our present purpose, our modern innovators, in setting up a pretended Reformation within these late days, have only copied after their forefathers, all the Heretics of former times, and walked in their footsteps.

This

This perfect resemblance subsisting between the Reformation and the anathematized heresies of ancient times, must, at least, be owned a strong prejudice against it; yet not the only one, nor the most material.

The fatal divisions, which are known to have prevailed within the precincts of the Reformation, since its first establishment, are another unanswerable objection to the credit of it, and a perpetual inherent disgrace. Variations in the exposition of Faith, as the Bishop of Meaux judiciously observes, have been always looked upon as a mark of falshood; and yet it is notorious, that even the original sect of the Reformation, under the inspection and immediate direction of its founder, was continually wavering and varying in its symbols or confessions of faith; as may be seen at length in the history of the variations of the Protestant Churches, by the learned Bishop just mentioned. But the fundamental disagreements in faith, which immediately broke out among them, in the numerous heterogeneous sects springing up, like so many hydras heads, out of Luther's revolt, and as different from one another in their belief and terms of Communion, as they were from their Mother Church, from which they first deserted, confirm our objection to the credit of the Reformation, beyond a reply, Luther, 'tis well known, was the ringleader of the rebellion: many, fond of novelties, flocked to him, and listed, at first, under his standard; aiming at nothing more than barely making war
against

against their Mother Church at any rate: but having now renounced their natural allegiance, and caught the itch of innovating from their leader, they began to think themselves as well qualified as him for the task, grew impatient of a subjection to a chief, and therefore soon revolted from him, to put up their own colours; and being thus divided into separate bodies, became the authors of different and contradictory systems of doctrine. A frightful idea of a godly Reformation! No, it cannot be imagined, it was not possible that a work, so inconsistent with itself, should be inspired and conducted by the Holy Ghost, and therefore it is certainly miscalled under that pompous title.

Again, the bad characters of these pretended Reformers, their dissolute lives, and the motives which engaged them in their revolt, *viz.* pride, lust, and other inordinate passions, as is well known to every one the least conversant in the histories of the late religious revolutions, is another additional prejudice to the Protestant cause, and a corroborative proof that the spirit of God, which breathes nothing but sanctity and truth, never made use of, nor was aiding to such wicked instruments, for the propagation of his honour or the Reformation of his Church; nor to have had any hand in a work undertaken upon such corrupt principles. For, how much soever the authors of it may have given it out for the work of light, or the purity of the gospel, and obtruded it as such on their deluded Disciples, it appeared the contrary, in all its circumstances, to every unprejudiced

diced eye ; the co-operation of the powers of darkness was visible through the whole, and the marks of untruth and ungodliness were evidently stamp'd upon it.

To make good this assertion, we need only draw a parallel between the authors of the Reformation and the Apostles, the first planters of Christianity, as well as other ministers of God's word, indisputably allowed to be such, on other occasions ; and to weigh the manifest disparity between the merits and works of the one and the other ; for, as it is said, opposites appear in their truest light, being confronted together. First then, what the late pretended Reformers were, their own avowed characters will best declare ; *viz.* worldly, carnal men, uncommissioned, without marks of being divinely inspired ; destitute not only of the gift of miracles, but of sanctity of life, and common virtue, to gain credit to their arrogated prerogative of becoming Apostles : apostate friars, or dissolute priests, wearied of celibacy and religious retirement, who set out by an open disobedience and rebellion against the Church and their supreme and lawful pastors ; forwarded their daring undertaking, and gained proselytes to their opinions, by flattering mens passions, and by an avowed espousal of liberty : who, in short, under the specious pretence of reforming errors and correcting abuses, broached novelties, introduced immorality, and supported it by principle.

And, who were the abettors of these irregular proceedings ? ambitious princes, professed libertines,

tines, men of abandoned consciences, who found their account in an unrestrained enjoyment of their pleasures, by taking up with such indulgent, condescending guides ; and avaricious statesmen, who plundered and ransacked the Churches, and filled their own coffers out of the spoils. The characters I have here set forth are neither feigned nor exaggerated ; attested facts, and the histories of the late religious confusions, vouch to the truth of them. *Vid.* Heylin's history of the Reformation of the Church of England.

The conclusion from these premises is the direct proof of what I just averred, That men of such corrupt manners and principles were unlikely persons to be chosen by Almighty God for the extraordinary calling of the Apostleship, and the Reformation of his Church ; and that, on the contrary, that boasted performance, coming from such hands, ought to be looked upon no otherwise than as an act of the greatest arrogance, and a barefaced cheat and imposture.

For whatsoever the advocates for the Reformation, no less idly than weakly, oppose to these invincible prejudices against the authors of it, as being unfit and unequal to so great an undertaking ; that Almighty God has, on occasions, drawn good out of evil : this, being admitted in general, can be of no service to the particular case of the Reformation, but makes it only appear in a more declining state, and is merely catching at a twig to save themselves from sinking.

Almighty

Almighty God has, no doubt, on occasions, thwarted the evil designs of wicked men, and drawn this good from them, to make them turn out, not only contrary to their presumptuous expectations, but even to their own confusion. 'Tis a truth no one questions. He has also, by his just judgments, and the secret dispositions of his impenetrable counsels, made use of one wicked man or kingdom to punish another; of which both Holy Writ and ecclesiastical and profane history furnish us with innumerable instances. He has also observed the same conduct in correcting his disobedient children, to reclaim them to their duty. Thus he used to chastise his own chosen people the Jews, by means of the Assyrians, and their neighbouring enemies, (though idolatrous wicked people themselves) who were the occasional scourges to the Divine Justice to punish their infidelity, and to bring them back to repentance. In the like manner, since the establishment of the law of grace, he, from time to time, chastises his Church by the means of external persecutions and intestine divisions, to the end the faithful may be proved, the unfaithful be known, and her rotten members cut off from her. Our Blessed Lord himself foretold that scandals would be, and mentions it as an occasional, or a kind of necessary evil, in order to separate the *cockle* from the *wheat*, the wicked from the good. And in a word, by the same extraordinary dispositions of his unsearchable Providence, we see, oftentimes, the wicked oppress the just for the exercise of their

confusion

d

patience,

patience, that their justice may prove more conspicuous, their merit be encreased, and Almighty God glorified in their virtue; which, no doubt, are great blessings resulting from some evil. But then, in all these instances, where evil has prevailed, it is evident that Almighty God's Providence has been barely passive, or permissive, for the several ends already alleged, and for other hidden designs of his impenetrable wisdom.

But I appeal to all histories, inspired, ecclesiastical and profane, whether it was ever known, from the beginning of the world to the time of the Reformation, that Almighty God made use of wicked men, as his chosen and immediate instruments for propagating the honour and glory of his name, for the establishing his Church, or for the promulgation of truth and the abolishment of error: and I appeal to the sense of all mankind whether such a conduct seems suitable to our notion of an omnipotent, omniscient and benign Providence. The Psalmist indeed says, that Almighty God is pleased to *receive his praises from the mouths of infants and suckling babes*. Psalm viii. v. 3. The Apostle also observes that *He has, on occasions, chosen the foolish of the world to confound the wise, and the weak to defeat the strong*. 1 Cor. i. v. 27. But it is no where mentioned in Holy Writ, that Almighty God made choice of the impious as proper instruments to bring about such extraordinary events, or to co-operate with him in his works of grace. And therefore, if no instance

instance can be produced till this renowned epoch, of Almighty God's acting in this manner; and if it be inconsistent with our idea of his infinite wisdom and goodness; why shall we presume to think that he then, and only then, began to alter his conduct, and the usual course of his Divine Providence, in chusing, for the Reformation of his Church and abolishing error, men of abandoned consciences, without virtue, without principles, without sanctity of life and manners, to gain credit to their enterprise? no, it is not credible, we must renounce our faith, our reason and common sense, to give into such an extravagant paradox: and this reflection might alone be sufficient, to every man of serious thought and unprejudiced judgment, to sink the reputation of a Church so inauspiciously founded, carried on upon the most corrupt motives, and concluding (as I hope to prove in the sequel of this essay) in the subversion of the true faith, of pure christian virtue, and evangelical morality,

But now, to come to the other part of the parallel; as the deformity of vice is displayed in its truest shades, when confronted with its contrary virtue, and falsehood seen best through its opposite truth, so the following instances of Apostolic men, whose virtue and election were never questioned, opposed to our late Reformers, being in character the very reverse of them, will discover their unsuitness to the great undertaking they presumptuously pretended to, beyond all contra-

diction. I say therefore, that if we look back into all foregoing ages, we shall find that it has been the constant, unvariable conduct of Almighty God to make use of chosen souls, for the undertaking and carrying on enterprizes of the greatest moment; those particularly which had immediate relation to the propagation of his divine honour: *to wit*, he made choice of men actually qualified for the great purposes to which they were called; men of consummate virtue, of integrity of life; men of sanctity, and, in every respect irreproachable; or rendered them such by a profusion of his extraordinary graces conferred upon them, and even by privileging them with the miraculous powers.

SUCH was MOSES, the leader of the Israelites, God's once chosen people, a man endued with all kind of qualifications, natural and supernatural; a profound wisdom, and unparalleled virtue, and gifted with the powers of working extraordinary signs and miracles. These distinguished privileges were what created him a name, and obtained him a credit amongst his people, gave a sanction to his mission and betokened it to come immediately from God himself. All the rest of the Patriarchs and Prophets of the old law, delegated by Almighty God on errands of the like nature, and the spiritual guides of that people, were also distinguished by similar gifts of nature and grace. The great John the Baptist proved also his mission by his exemplary life and uncommon virtues; and

and the Apostles, called by JESUS CHRIST to the ministry of his word, to divulgate the glory of his name, and to echo the truths of his gospel to the remotest parts of the world, (though originally simple illiterate fishermen) were first brought up in the School of CHRIST, imbued by this Divine Master in the rudiments of virtue, and the science of eternal life; gradually weaned from the world and its corruptions, and lastly illuminated in a miraculous manner, and confirmed in grace by the descent of the HOLY GHOST upon them, to qualify them for their sublime ministry: and even Saul, of a persecutor of CHRIST and his Church, miraculously brought into his fold and become a Disciple, was yet to be prepared by prayer, fasting and the infusion of supernatural gifts into his soul, to fit him for the office of an Apostle of the Gentiles, and to become a vessel of election.

I'll close this list of Apostles with one of a modern date, a cotemporary to the pretended Reformers, the great St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies, whose avowed and celebrated virtues, unwearied labours, blessed by Heaven with a stupendous success in the conversion of above a million of Infidels to the faith of CHRIST, and sealed with the power of working miracles, in their nature surprizing, and in their number so many as to seem to have been a habit infused: these supernatural qualifications and endowments of grace did, I say, denote him to have been
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another vessel of election, for the propagation of God's honour, for the divulging of the Gospel, and the dilating of his Church.

But how unlike to this great man and the other eminent and chosen ministers of God's word, our late pretended gospellers and Reformers were, this plain parallel between one and the other manifestly shows: and how infinitely they fall short of the just idea we conceive of persons chosen by God, and delegated by him to promulgate the purity of the Gospel and to reform his Church, or, in other terms, to be the abolishers of error, and the restorers of truth, is equally evident from their avowed characters. For, in a word, all we know of them is, that they were wicked, profligate and sacrilegious men; commencing Apostles by the breach of the most solemn vows they had made to their Divine Maker: we know, that they rose in open rebellion against their Mother Church, and that the springs of their revolt were human passions, the spirit of pride, revenge, disobedience; and the most criminal motives. But we are nowhere assured that, upon their taking upon themselves, in this presumptuous, inauspicious manner; uncommissioned, uncalled, unqualified to become Reformers, that they became more reformed themselves, more sanctified and regular in their conduct, more chaste, mortified, humble, or observant of the evangelical counsels; and therefore we have the less reason to think them capacitated for operating such a reform on others,

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or that they were chosen and gifted by Almighty God for the execution of so great a design. And this, I presume to repeat again, has, and will always be, an invincible objection to the Protestant cause with every rational man, unbiaſſed and diſpaſſionate, in ſpite of their idle plea, that Almighty God can and has drawn good out of evil : for tho' this be true, in the limited ſenſe, in which we have inſtanced it above, yet in the moſt important concern of conſtituting or reforming a Church, it is wholly unprecedented.

Our adverſaries are ſo well ſatisfied of the force and juſtice of this reaſoning, from the nature of the thing, that they occasionally adopt it in their own defence, againſt ſuch as, from time to time, revolt from them, and quit their tenets to ſet up a new ſyſtem of doctrine. Thus the Anabaptiſts no ſooner ſeparated from their head Patriarch Luther, and modelled a Church after their own faſhion and humour, than he called upon them to prove their commiſſion by undoubted marks of its coming from Heaven, and of its being ſtamped with the divine ſeal ; and in default of their producing theſe credentials, he conjured them to adhere to the ſcheme of faith they had received from him. And without appealing to any other remote inſtances of the like nature, does not the Church of England, at this time uſe the ſame language with the new ſet of innovators called Methodiſts, and with as many others as renounce her authority, and diſſent from her in points of doctrine

doctrine or discipline? how inconsistent indeed they are with themselves, and Luther before them, in this conduct, is obvious to every one's reflection; for, by the same right that Luther himself separated from his Mother Church, without being able to produce his credentials or powers to give a sanction to his revolt, by that right did his followers depart from him, and others again from them, and so may continue to do to the end of the chapter; according to that celebrated saying of Tertullian above fifteen hundred years ago, grounded on his observation of the differences among the innovators of those early days: "What is allowed to Valentin, is likewise so to the Valentinians; the Marcionists have equal power with Marcion;" *Tertul. de Præscrip.* c. 42. which only evinces this certain and incontestable truth, that a cause originally and fundamentally bad, can never be brought to a state of perfection and stability by any alterations whatsoever; but, like an edifice raised on a sandy foundation, or a tree bad at the root, will either suddenly fall to the ground, or insensibly decay.

However, waving this strong prejudice against the Reformation, (which can never be got over) from the undue commission of the authors of it, and their want of qualifications to render them equal to so great an undertaking; we will, pursuant to my first design, give it all the weight the circumstances of it will bear, or that our adversaries can in justice expect, by examining it by the gospel

gospel-rule, the tree by its fruits; that is to say, we will consider how far its real merits answer the pompous title. To this effect it will be necessary, as I have already premised, to fix a simple, precise idea of a Church Reformation, strictly such, and to examine how near the late much-boasted performance comes up to it; for it is not, as I said before, what a thing is called, or what it is supposed to be, but what it effectually is, which should influence our judgments: and real, not imaginary merits are to determine our differences.

Now I apprehend that a Church Reformation may be defined, or not improperly conceived, under this disjunctive idea, *viz.* an abolishment of error and superstition, or an alteration of discipline, in order to the amendment or perfecting of mens lives and manners. That the Church is susceptible of a reform, in the second larger acceptance of the word, was never doubted; and has been often practised by a change of discipline in regard to the whole body, or a part of the Church, according to the several exigences of times and circumstances. This with regard to the whole body has been done from time to time by decrees of general councils, or by ordinances from the supreme pastors, directed to the diffusive body of the Church, and sealed by their acceptance and filial submission to them: and relatively to particular parts of the Church, the separate regulations of distinct districts and dioceses, the institutions of several religious orders, promoting the service of Almighty God under their respective

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rules, are, strictly speaking, so many particular reformations of manners and private discipline; and therefore a reformation in this respect has never been disallowed, or the legality of it disputed.

The main question, then, between Protestants and us, is, Whether the Church was ever liable to a reform in point of doctrine; or in other terms, Whether it has, or could fall into error and superstition? our adversaries assert it, as needs they must, to justify their claim to their pretended merit of becoming Reformers, and to give a plausible pretence to their separation from their Mother Church. Catholics, on the other hand, not only have as positively and constantly denied it, but presume to shew that their pretended Reformation has been even defective in the second and larger acceptation of the word, a reformation of manners and discipline, and that it turns out, in the whole, like a sumptuous edifice which is faulty in the foundation, and irregular in the superstructure, and has nothing but a pompous outward show of a front to recommend it.

But still, it must be owned, we are never the nearer the end of our controversy, for what one says or the other denies; avowed facts and merits can only decide it: what these are, or ought to be, the definition of a Reformation, just stated, plainly insinuates; and whether the pretended Reformation can lay a claim to them is what we are next
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to inquire into; *to wit*, whether it has effectually contributed to a general amendment of manners?—whether it has eradicated loose and libertine principles, and has introduced a stricter discipline and regularity in their stead?—whether it has established a more implicit unlimited obedience to Almighty God in his representatives, the Church and its ministers?—whether, thro' its means, the evangelical counsels have been more enforced, and the practice of morality has been seen to gain ground?—whether, the way of the Cross, self-denials and mortifications have been inculcated, and the ancient fasts of the Church kept up to their primitive rigour?—but chiefly and fundamentally, whether it has caused the abolishment of error and superstition, and brought back the faith of CHRIST, supposed to have been corrupted, to its primitive purity?

These are the fruits which were to be expected from this pretended evangelical work: but if the Reformation has failed of answering these several expectations, and is proved to be an idle, presumptuous attempt; and it can be proved, on the other hand, that the Catholic Church is clear of all their impeachments of error, and comes up to our perfect idea of the Church of CHRIST, not only in the integrity of her faith, as necessary to salvation, but in the exactness of her discipline, as a means to evangelical perfection; it then follows, of course, that this much-boasted Reformation, or Protestants separating from us, was without reason.

reason, without foundation, and unjustifiable; a *titulus sine re*, a mere pompous empty name.

To make good therefore this inference is my present task; the vanity and unjustifiableness of the Reformation, in all its circumstances, and the insufficiency of it to the several purposes, for which it ought to have been intended and framed, is what I undertake to prove; and to the end my proofs may be less liable to exception, I flatter myself to be able to deduce them from their own principles and supposed rule of faith, Scripture, in its obvious and natural sense. I say, their supposed rule of faith, because, though they pretend to make Scripture their rule of faith, yet it is certain that it is not Scripture in its genuine sense, but Scripture wrested and tortured to an alien meaning by the interpretation of private judgment, which is effectually their rule of faith. But since they make a boast of appealing to the plain word of God, and we agree to put the issue of the debate to this test; yet, the rule being in itself imperfect and unfit to be made a fixt standard of faith, therefore, in order to prevent all ambiguity and mistakes on this head, and to obviate any cavils, that might arise from them, I beg leave to observe, first, that by Scripture in its obvious and genuine sense, I mean the natural import of the text, resulting from a serious reading of every man of sound judgment, and of an honest heart and unprejudiced mind; not of any ignorant peasant, conceited craftsman, or Church empirick. But still, by plain Scripture I do not mean the dead

dead letter, but Scripture as explained by, and reconciled to itself in obscure passages, by others clear and perspicuous:—I mean, in fine, Scripture as it has been understood and expounded by the sacred interpreters of the primitive and pure ages of the Church. In this sense, I say, I undertake to prove the tenets of the Catholic Church to be perfectly consonant to the word of God, and the Reformation to be wholly dissonant from it. I observe, secondly, that by putting the issue of our debate to clear Scripture, we would not be understood thereby to admit the dead letter of Scripture, so, much less Scripture of private interpretation, to be the decisive rule of faith and arbiter of religious controversies:—thirdly, I do not mean by this condescendance to renounce apostolical tradition as a part of the word of God and actual rule of faith, nor to exclude the Church from her prerogative insured to her, by CHRIST's solemn promises, of being the sole interpreter of the divine oracles, and arbiter of all religious controversies and differences; on the contrary, as this point is the fundamental corner stone of the Church, the bone of offence, and stumbling block to our adversaries, and the main object of their spleen in their rash attempt upon a Reformation, it justly challenges our first attention; and therefore, is what I propose to begin with the defence of, in the following dissertations. But still, I say, without giving up the Church's undoubted right and prerogative of being the legal and natural judge of all our religious debates, we have such a confidence in the goodness of our cause, that, in

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condescension to our adversaries, we are not afraid of bringing it to their own bar, the plain text of Scripture in its obvious sense. Such is the force of truth, that it cannot fail of appearing to advantage at every tribunal: *magna est veritas & prævalet*. All I have to fear, is, lest the cause of truth may suffer under my management of it, which that God may avert is my repeated prayer; that the enemies of truth may be converted, or confuted, is the extent of my malice; and that its friends may be confirmed in their profession of it, is the term of my wishes, and the whole scope of my feeble endeavours.





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Important Enquiry, &c.

CHAP. I.

The true Church of Christ can never err in matters of Faith; and, therefore, an attempt on a Reformation of her was vain and groundless.



HE being or not being of an unerring guide, in matters of faith, has been always justly looked upon as a point of the last importance towards fixing the Church's authority and stability; the point by which the means of salvation are ascertained to her members; by which the merits of the Reformation may be directly determined, and the secondary lesser controversies decided under one. For, if there is a living unerring guide in points of faith, and the Church can make good her claim to that prerogative, she from thence becomes the sanctuary and repository of Truth, and her authority ought to be revered and obeyed: by the tenure of the same privilege her members are safe under her influence and direction; the door is thereby absolutely shut to a Reformation,

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and the Church is out of the reach of every impeachment whatsoever.

THE Ringleaders of the Reformation were sensible of the justice and force of these Inferences : they knew that so long as the Church was sheltered under the cover of infallibility, she was impregnable in every other part, and therefore their first attempt was to dislodge her out of these intrenchments ; but, how vainly, and unsuccessfully, we are now to consider.

As our adversaries affect to take Scripture alone, that is, the written word of God, for the standard and test by which they would have all controversies tried, I must observe that nothing less than clear Scripture ought to be admitted in the present debate, or to be allowed of sufficient weight to dispossess the Church of her tenure of infallibility and her prescriptive right of being the sovereign judge and arbiter in matters of faith ; which, by her own account, she claims from the foundation and establishment of christianity ; and, even by the confession of her adversaries, had been in quiet, uninterrupted possession of for the space of several hundred years : cavils, therefore, quibbles, false glosses and misrepresentations, have nothing to do in this controversy : Scripture is the umpire mutually agreed to ; but Scripture, I say, in its plain and obvious sense, and as understood in the earliest times by the sacred interpreters, revered for their virtue and learning ; and not as misrepresented by the forced constructions of wit, dissingenuity and the spirit of innovating, which is ever more fruitful of invention than equitable to truth.

Now, Catholics think they can produce clear Scripture in support of their side of the debate, *the Church's claim to infallibility* ; we dare defy our adversaries to produce clear Scripture in opposition to it ; and as to their replies to the plain texts quoted by us, we doubt not, by the grace of God, to make it appear, that they are no more than strained explanations and mere
cavils,

cavils, which, as I just observed, must be deemed insufficient to over-rule our plain evidences.

I'LL confine myself, in this controversy, to the texts of the New Testament, which, as they immediately affect the subject in question, are more fit to determine the issue of it, and will fully answer this desirable purpose with every man divested of passion and prejudice, who has no other view than that truth should prevail.

SECTION I.

The Church's infallibility proved from clear Scripture.

AMONG the many texts of the New Testament which the Catholics have to produce in defence of the Church's indefeasible right to infallibility, our blessed Lord's promise to St. PETER I take to be not the least clear, apposite and significant.—*Thou art PETER, that is a rock, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. v. 18. The natural import of this text is obvious, implying, as plain as words can express, three important truths;—1. The stability of the Church, intimated by its solid foundation, being *built on a rock*;—2. A prediction of the violent efforts which would be incessantly made by the powers of darkness to undermine the Church and subvert its constitution;—and, lastly, CHRIST's solemn promise of his effectual aid to enable her to defeat all these vain attempts of her infernal enemies,—*the gates of Hell shall not prevail*, &c. The prediction we have seen verified in the innumerable storms raised against the Church from outward persecutions of infidels and unbelievers, and from intestine divisions of its own rebellious children; and we have no more reason to distrust CHRIST's power or fidelity, in fulfilling his promises, than to question

his foreknowledge of these future events; it would even be blasphemy to do it. Moreover, the noble victorious stand the Church had effectually made from time to time, before the epoch of the Reformation, (acknowledged even by our adversaries) sufficiently instances CHRIST's extraordinary providence over his Church; and, to every unprejudiced person, that is, to every one who has not made it his interest to contest the Church's prerogatives, evinces the accomplishment of CHRIST's promises to her.

BUT our blessed Lord's special providence over his Church is more distinctly declared in the sequel of his promises, by which he confirms, strengthens and enhances, those he had just given before. His paternal concern for her preservation did not rest in providing indefinitely for her defence and safety, but he, moreover, graciously vouchsafed to signify and point out the particular means by which this victorious, supernatural aid would be subministered to her. These happy tidings stand upon record in the 11 Ch. of St. JOHN, where our blessed Saviour is mentioned to address his disciples in words affording present comfort to them, and an earnest to his Church, thereafter, of its becoming the object of his ever-watchful care: *I will pray the father, and he will give you another paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth*: John, xiv. v. 16, 17. and he had told them before, that *when he shall come (the spirit of truth) he shall guide you into all truth*, John, xvi. v. 13. Here our blessed Lord first acquaints his disciples with the nature of the blessing his eternal Father had in store for them and his Church, to wit, *another paraclete*, that is, a comforter, who, when he were separated from them, would supply his personal absence, and be always with them, as their support under all their future trials, pressures and difficulties; a blessing which would be the *spirit of truth*: so that what is as incompatible with truth as darkness with light, to wit, *error* and *seduction*, should be absolutely excluded from it, and find no admittance

tance or access; that tho' the *gates of Hell* would be open to send forth all its infernal forces to destroy it, they *should not prevail*: and lastly, he insures to them the continuance or perpetuity of this blessing, that *he may abide with you for ever*; that is, with them; with their successors, and with the whole Church *for ever—to the end of the world.*

IN a word, these texts are so intelligible, and directly apposite to the point I have undertaken to maintain, that to offer to explain them, or to place them in a clearer light than they appear in their own naked view, divested of all glosses and interpretations, would be as ridiculous as to attempt to prove first principles; and that man must be very fruitful of subtleties and distinctions who can wrest the texts to any other sense or meaning than what the words naturally import; to wit, that which is the Catholic sense of them, and is the direct assertion of the Church's pretensions. I am confident that had our blessed Lord delivered the contradictory of the texts I have now laid before you, our adversaries would have looked on them as positive proofs of their favourite opinion of the Church's *fallibility*; and therefore why the present tenor of the texts should not carry the same weight, and be deemed equally conclusive for its *infallibility*, and influence our understandings into an undoubted assent to it, requires more sagacity to discover than I am master of. 'Tis certain that they had this effect on the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who looked upon these declarations from the Oracle of truth, in the behalf of his Church, as such an ample and unquestionable establishment of her prerogative, that he was not content barely to profess his belief of it, but endeavoured to conform to his divine Master in his conception of the thing, and his manner of expressing it; for, as CHRIST signifies the indefectibility of the Church by the firmness of its foundation, comparing it to a house built on a rock, so this vessel of election, the faithful interpreter of CHRIST's doctrine, styles it *the pillar and ground of truth*,

truth; 1 Tim. iii. v. 15. a metaphor which, in its own nature, imprints on our minds a similar idea of stability and immutability: and unless our blessed Lord had settled his Church on this indefeasible footing, it is not to be conceived how He himself should direct such an unlimited obedience to be paid to her authority, as to anathematise for heathens, publicans, and aliens, all such as should behave refractory to it: yet this he has done very expressly—*if he will not hear the Church*, says he, *let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican*, Matt. xviii. v. 17. And still, addressing his Church in more emphatical terms, he, as it were, equals her authority with his own, and interprets every slight put upon her as a personal injury offered to his own divine prerogative, and to his eternal Father himself; *he*, says he, *that hears you hears me; he that despises you despises me; and he that despises me despises him that sent me*, Luke, x. v. 16. Now, I say, it is not credible that our blessed Lord would have conferred his divine authority on a fallible Church, such as the Church is supposed by our adversaries, and which, being in that defective capacity, might be liable to act in a manner derogatory to the honour, and unworthy of the influence of his increated wisdom, sanctity and truth.

SUCH, nevertheless, are the unavoidable and even avowed consequences of our adversaries doctrine; and, what is worse, they are contradictory to the sacred testimonies of the word of God, to which they pretend to appeal. For, in short, the state of the present controversy, in the clearest and most simple view, is this: here are two opposite opinions concerning the Church's authority, and her spiritual capacity; the one is the Catholics, asserting the Church, as a spiritual guide, to be infallible in her faith and in her decisions; the other the Protestants absolutely denying her this privilege: and these opinions are to be tried by Scripture: Scripture we produce directly relating to the point in dispute. Now the question is, Which of the two opinions is supported by these sacred testimonies? the plain words

words and natural import of them, as we have seen, are clearly on the Catholics side; and, consequently, nothing but evasions and forced constructions can be the Protestant plea; the principal whereof is, that the alledged promises are conditional, *viz.* depending on the Church's fidelity; or, that they are limited to the persons of the Apostles. But how arbitrary and precarious these assertions are, I leave to every one to judge from the direct tenor of the texts, which are as absolute as words can make them, without the least intimation of any condition tack'd to them. And the cause or motives of CHRIST's giving these solemn promises to his Church, *viz.* the exigency of his extraordinary assistance and presence to preserve it from error, subsists to the latest times; or, rather, is the more prevalent, as the Church is farther removed from the Apostle's happy days, in which CHRIST's instructions were recent and fresh in every one's memory. What our blessed Lord told his Apostles just before his Ascension, when he commissioned them to enter on their Apostolic charge, is an absolute confirmation of this presumption—*Going therefore, says he, teach ye all nations—and behold I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,* Matt. xxviii. c. 19, 20.

IN this text I must observe again three things to be implied, or rather plainly expressed;—the first is CHRIST's commission to his Apostles, to baptise and teach all nations;—the second is his promise of being aiding to them in the execution of this commission, and the faithful discharge of their ministry;—and the last is a continuance of this aid to the end of the world. The commission itself cannot be supposed, even by our adversaries, to have been personal; that is, to be limited to the Apostles, and terminating in them: because, so long as there should be any remains of superstition and infidelity in the world—as long as mankind were subject to error, so long would there be occasion for evangelical labourers, in order to disabuse them of their errors, and to bring them to the know-

ledge and belief of CHRIST; and so long also would these sacred ministers stand in need of special help and assistance from above, to enable them to accomplish this great work. The exigency, as I just observed, but too visibly subsists, and is like to subsist to the end of the world; and therefore there can be no doubt of God's gracious mercy in providing for it: and, in short, our blessed Lord, to remove all cause of distrust of the perpetuity of this inestimable blessing, has, in the aforesaid text, expressly promised it at all times, and to prolong it to the end of time. *And behold*, says he, *I am with you always, even unto the consumation of the world*; Matt. xxviii. v. 20. not with the Apostles only, most certainly; because, being mortal men, their lives were circumscribed by the course of nature within a short period of time; therefore it was to be with them, and with the Church, in a continual succession of pastors to the world's end.

AGAIN, the circumstances of time, and the remarkable occasions in which our blessed Saviour made these solemn promises to his Church, are not the least deserving our notice, nor a small confirmation of their design, efficacy and extent.

THE first promise, intimating that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church*, Matt. xvi. v. 18. was directed to St. PETER upon that solemn occasion when, in reward of his unparalleled faith and glorious profession of the divinity of CHRIST, he constituted him his vicar, and visible head of his Church; in token whereof he changes his former name of SIMON into that of PETER, which is interpreted *a rock*, and declares his intentions of building his future Church upon him——*and upon this rock I will build my Church*, Matt. xvi. v. 18. He gives him a name adapted to the nature and efficacy of the thing which he proposed to signify, viz. the unshaken stability of the Church; which, like an edifice raised upon a rock, would be proof against any storms whatsoever; so that, tho' Hell would assail her with all its infernal forces, and put every stratagem in execution to under-

undermine her foundations, they should fail in their vain attempt—*the gates of hell shall not prevail, &c.*

THE other promises were delivered either on the eve of his sacred Passion, or just before his glorious Ascension, when, at both one and the other of these occasions, he was going to leave them in the utmost state of dereliction, on their impending loss of him, and consequently in the greatest concern for the welfare of his infant Church, which was scarce founded; than, humanly speaking, it was looking towards its final dissolution. Our blessed Lord therefore paternally obviates these distrustful, desponding thoughts; dissipates their apprehensions, and rouzes their hopes, by giving them the solemn assurance of another comforter, and a more lasting support—*the spirit of truth, to guide his Church into all truth*, St. John c. 16. v. 13.—*and to abide with it to the end of the world*, Matt. c. 28. v. 19, 20. These promises, I say, were not more comfortable than seasonable.

How many concurrent evidences and corroborative proofs are here of the Catholic pretensions! the plain words of the sacred texts, which nothing but affected dissingenuity and forced constructions can wrest from their natural meaning, are an uncontestable evidence, and such a one as our adversaries, by the rule of faith they pretend to appeal to, clear Scripture in its obvious and natural sense, are bound to admit of. The end of these divine promises, *to wit*, our dependance on the perpetuity and preservation of his Church to the latest times, plainly expressed in the tenor of the texts, is another invincible proof. The time or occasions on which these solemn promises were delivered are an undeniable confirmation of the intent of them; and even the obstinate resistance our adversaries make to these undeniable evidences to the Church's prerogative, becomes itself an additional proof of it; because it evinces that there can be nothing so evident which wit and dissingenuity may not find ways of eluding, or the wilfulness and perverseness of man's mind will not be ready to contest; and therefore Scripture can-

not be so clear in itself, on the Catholic side of the question, but heretical depravity can torture it to a contrary meaning, which concludes a seeming necessity of the existence of a supreme tribunal, from which there should be suffered no appeal. But, in the mean while, as such a tribunal is by our adversaries rejected, we have only a middle way of adjusting our differences, usual among contending parties when they cannot come to an agreement, and decline carrying on their dispute to a higher court, *viz*, of putting it to a reference: none more proper in our present case than the primitive fathers of the Church, who must be admitted to be the most faithful and unexceptionable interpreters of the sacred Writings. But, because these venerable authorities may be consulted at length in a full collection of them in almost every treatise that has appeared on this subject, for brevity's sake I'll content myself with producing two or three short extracts from them, as far as may answer my purpose, barely to shew what was their sense and opinion of CHRIST's aforesaid promises to his Church, and to prove the Catholic interpretation of them to be conformable to theirs.

St. CYRIL of Alexandria declares the Church of CHRIST to be settled and established on St. PETER, through his faith, (which was the cause of his being thus privileged by CHRIST) *as never to fail, but to bear up against the gates of hell, and so to remain for ever*, St. CYRIL, Alex. Dial. de Trin. l. 4. A Catholic could not express the doctrine of infallibility in plainer terms. St. CYPRIAN, more at length, delivers himself on the same subject as follows, "CHRIST, in the Gospel, when his disciples went away from him as he was speaking, turning to the twelve said, What! will you also depart?—PETER answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go! Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and have known that thou art the son of the living GOD. PETER speaks here, upon whom the Church was built, declaring, in the name of the Church, That tho' great numbers of such stubborn
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“ and selfwilled people as will not submit, become deserters, *yet the Church will never fall from CHRIST*; which Church is, The people united to the priest, and the flock following their pastor, *Cypr. Epist. 69. ad Flor. Papinianum.*

AND again he says that——“ The Church, being the spouse of CHRIST, *cannot be an adulteress*; she is *uncorrupt and pure*—she it is that preserves us for Heaven, and gives to her children, whom she has brought forth, the inheritance of a crown, *St. Cypr. ibid.*

St. AUSTIN also, on these words of the 57th psalm—*they have gone astray from the womb and spoken lies*—expresses himself to the following effect——“ Were they therefore gone astray from the womb because they have spoken lies? or, rather, have they not spoken lies, because they were gone astray from the womb? *For 'tis in the Church's womb that truth remains*: who-soever is separated from this womb of the Church *must of necessity speak lies, &c. Aug. Exer. in Ps. 57. Numb. 6. Tom. 4. p. 545.*

AGAIN——“ Here is shewn GOD and his temple; which is the holy Church, the one Church, the true Church, the Catholic Church, which fights against all heresies. Fight she may, *but she can't be foiled*. All heresies have gone out from her like useless branches lopt off from the vine: *but she remains in her root*.—*the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her, St. Aug. de Symbol. ad Catech. Ch. 6. Tom. 9.*

AND upon these words of the 101st psalm,—*In the assembling the people together in one, and kings to serve our Lord, he answered him in the way of his strength*——the same saint introduces heretics objecting to the Church's stability, and refutes their objection as follows——“ But that Church which was spread through all nations now has no longer a being—it is quite lost! This is the cry of those who are not in the Church. *O impudent clamour!* she is not, because you don't belong to her——see that you have not, for that reason, lost your being; for she will have a being tho' you have
“ none.

“ none. *This abominable and accursed calumny, full of*
 “ *presumption and deceit, void of all truth, wisdom and*
 “ *reason; idle, temerarious, rash and pernicious, the spi-*
 “ *rit of God foresaw, when, even, as it were, against*
 “ *them, he proclaimed her unity, in assembling the people*
 “ *in one, and kings to serve our lord*——Because there
 “ were to arise some that would say against her——’tis
 “ true she was, but now she is perished: *Shew me*, says
 “ she, *the sewnness of my days*. I do not enquire for my
 “ days in the next world, those are without end. ’Tis
 “ not those days of eternity I ask for, I desire to know
 “ my *continuance in this world*. These days I desire
 “ you to shew me. And he has shewed me, neither
 “ was the answer insignificant. And who was it but he
 “ that is the very way? And what was the information
 “ he gave me?——*Behold I am with you to the end of the*
 “ *world*, Aug. Enarr. 2. in Ps. 101.

Now from this, and all the foregoing citations, ’tis
 plain that the fathers unanimously concurred in the belief
 of an unerring, infallible Church; for what else means
 these expressive declarations, that *it is in the Church’s*
womb truth remains——*that being the spouse of CHRIST*
she can’t become an adulteress——*that she is pure and un-*
corrupt, and will always remain in her root, even to the
end of the world?

It is also certain, that they maintained the Church’s
 prerogative with no less warmth and zeal against the op-
 pugners of it, the heretics of their own days, looking on
 their opposition with the greatest horror and indignation;
 St. AUSTIN in particular, as we have seen, styles it *an im-*
udent clamour——*an abominable and accursed calumny*:
 and by the same token, all other opponents, in whatso-
 ever age they appear, come under the same censure.

It is also observable, that the Fathers ground their
 steadfast belief of the Church’s infallibility on the promises
 of CHRIST to his Church before cited, viz. *that the*
gates of hell shall not prevail against her——*behold I am with*
you to the end of the world, &c. &c.

THE consequence, immediately flowing from these observations, is the direct confirmation of what I had to prove, *viz.* That the Catholic interpretation of the afore-said promises, by the judgment of these unexceptionable referees, is true and genuine, and in the same sense, and to the same effect as they themselves understood and expounded them; that is, towards the establishment of the Church's undoubted prerogative: that therefore the contrary interpretation of the Reformers must be reputed spurious, arbitrary and unnatural, anathematized long ago by these great lights of the Church, or, as I said, comprised within their condemnation of the Heretics of their own times.

AND therefore, tho' I might here very well drop my pen, and close this important debate with the testimonies of these irrefragable vouchers; yet I cannot forbear drawing some other obvious consequences from the foregoing premises, which further evince the justice of the Catholic cause, and the badness of our adversaries; or at least, if they cannot give an additional weight to the precedent proofs, they may make us more sensible of the weight they carry already, and will place their merit in a light more conspicuous.

SECTION II.

Inferences from the premises confirming the Catholic doctrine of the Church's infallibility, with other collateral and rational proofs fully refuting the opposition of her adversaries.

WHEN our late Gospellers undertook the work of Reforming, they pretended, as we have seen, to raise their edifice upon the foundation of Scripture; that is, on the pure word of GOD alone: The purity of the Gospel was the general cry: All religious tenets were to be brought to this test; and therefore if their pompous

ous performance has not come up to this standard, it must be judged to have failed in the foundation, and the whole structure to be consequently faulty and ruinous. Yet this, I presume to think, and flatter myself I have proved to be their case in the present controversy, which is acknowledged to be the principal and fundamental between them and us. We have produced clear Scripture on the Catholic side of the question: we have made it appear that our adversaries have no clear Scripture to bring against it; and therefore if, at first setting out, they recede from their own established rule, by quitting the plain and natural sense of the text for their own arbitrary interpretations, nothing but convincing, irresistible reasons can justify this discession.

WHEN the Catholic Church, with regard to any part of the sacred Writings, seems to quit the literal sense of the text, the motives inducing her to it are apparent, solid, and unexceptionable; such as are the reconciling Scripture with itself, where there is a seeming clashing or contradiction in the texts. Thus, for instance, where our blessed Saviour is mentioned to say, *my father is greater than I*, John c. 14. v. 28. (which, literally understood, insinuates an inequality of the divine persons, and establishes the Arian Dogma) the Church, confronting this text with many others, positively asserting the son's consubstantiality with the Father, justly concludes this speech to have relation only to the human nature of CHRIST: and therefore to argue from parity of reason, it lies on our adversaries, in the present controversy, to produce clear Scripture in opposition to, and directly refuting the literal meaning of CHRIST's promises of Infallibility to his Church; or to shew manifest contradictions and fatal inconveniences to flow from this prerogative—as for example, that it is inconsistent with his infinite wisdom and bountiful providence—that it is prejudicial to the good and perpetuity of his Church—or, infine, that it is injurious to mankind in general, and an obstruction to his attaining the great end of his existence. But if no clear Scripture be, or can be brought against
the

the point in dispute, to ballance our quotations for the affirmative, (as has been already proved there cannot) and if the aforesaid consequences can in no respect be said to follow from the Catholic doctrine, and are, on the contrary, a necessary sequel of the Protestant tenets; then this controversy may be judged to be here at an end, and the cause decided.

YET this, to argue the case *ad hominem*, that is, canvassing the matter with our adversaries from their own way of reasoning, I apprehend to be the real truth of the matter, and so selfevident, that to go about to prove it may appear an idle and superfluous labour. But I must observe, that while we appeal to human probabilities and rational congruities, we would not be thought to build our main trust upon them: the Catholic belief rests upon a more lasting and solid foundation, *the promises of CHRIST*; and not upon any congruity of reason. We do not presume to circumscribe the divine providence, or to define in what manner it was becoming God's infinite wisdom to govern his Church: 'tis enough for us that we have *CHRIST's* insurance for the support of our faith, independent of human probabilities and plausible arguments deduced from the pure lights of reason. But when the one is made plain and undeniable, that is, when the word of God is clear on our side, (as we have seen it to be) the other may be allowed to carry weight in conjunction with, or rather, in consequence of these sacred authorities; especially as we are contending with adversaries who lay their principal stress upon mere rational inferences, or forced interpretations of Scripture, and arbitrary proofs.

Now, to state this argument impartially, and to set it in the most unexceptionable light, we will consider the two opposite systems of fallibility and infallibility problematically, and as bare hypotheses, and examine which of the two seems more agreeable to our idea of an infinitely wise and bountiful providence, and most conducive to the respective ends of the preservation of the Church, and to the good of mankind in general. We will also

consider, which of the two comes up to the prophetic description ISAIAH gives of the Church, saying, that it should be a *path or way* to salvation, that it would *be called the holy way, as fools shall not err therein*, Isaiah xxxv. 8. that is, being travellers in this mortal life, in a strange place, tending to our heavenly country, and ignorant of our road, the Church is our guide; and, according to the Prophet, is to put us into so direct a road, that the most weak, unlearned and ignorant may pursue his journey securely, without the least risk of missing his way.

I SAY then, first, supposing the system of infallibility to take place, that there is nothing in this system, but what is directly consistent with, and also most agreeable to our idea of an omniscient and benign providence, and perfectly reconcilable at the same time with the liberty of the creature; nothing but what ascertains the perpetuity of his Church, and an unerring rule of faith, and consequently a sure means of salvation to her children. For, to say that Almighty GOD in his infinite wisdom could not provide for his Church in general in this manner, without abridging each member in particular of his liberty, will be nothing less than blasphemy; for, tho' every individual be in himself fallible, yet Almighty GOD could, undoubtedly, not only prevent the whole collection of them from chiming together in an erroneous system of doctrine, but by the direction of an inward ineffable illumination of the Holy Spirit, bring them to conspire unanimously in the profession of one and the same orthodox faith. And to say again, that, providing for his Church in this manner, she would not be secure from error, and her members safe under her influence; or, to pursue the Prophet's thought, to say, that we should not travel more safely by the direction of an infallible than a fallible guide, is to talk rank nonsense.

ON the other hand, it is certain that the opposite system is attended with every one of these inconveniences, and is manifestly injurious to our idea of an infinitely wise and benign providence; for, if the Church, from its first establishment, be supposed to be out of the shel-

ter of infallibility, and unprovided with the insurances of an unerring guide to govern and direct it, it was consequently in a fluctuating state, *liable to be tost to and fro by every blast of erroneous doctrine*, Ephes. c. 4. v. 14. (as St. PAUL describes all those who are out of the pale of the true Church of CHRIST,) and therefore the *gates of hell*, that is, the efforts of Satan and the spirit of seduction might, without a special and extraordinary Providence, *have prevailed against it*, and she would be thereby in danger of leading her children out of the way.

AND, supposing it again in this wavering condition, liable to err, and that it had, according to the impeachments of our adversaries, effectually fallen into many gross errors, when the reformers undertook to discover them to the world, and to awaken it out of its profound lethargy, in which it had dozed for many centuries; as long as they themselves could lay no pretensions to infallibility, and that, by their fundamental principle, infallibility was a mere chimera, and a human invention, they could not certify us, that, though the Church they undertook to reform was in the wrong, they themselves were in the right; and then there was still room left for another Reform, or rather for Reforms on Reforms, without end; and a wide field opened to scepticism and deism! what a chaos of confusion, and heap of uncertainties must this produce! for, first as I said, in the very act of condemning the Church of error, the Reformers, being avowedly fallible, may themselves have been mistaken. Secondly, the doctrine they pretend to substitute for truth in lieu of this supposed error, which they censure, may itself be an error, and subject to another Reform: on this foundation, in effect, CALVIN reformed on LUTHER, others on him; and by the same principle, as I just observed, there can be no end of reforming. They may attempt to pull down, but it is impossible they should raise any solid structure, while the foundation is bad and defective.

HERE then, again, the Reformation fails in its very embryo, and proves abortive: instead of drawing mankind out of the state of error and darkness, it plunges him into an abyss of darkness, and a labyrinth of errors, out of which no Reformation, set up on the same defective principles, can possibly extricate him.

AND how inconsistent this system of fallibility is with our idea of an infinite wisdom and goodness, providing for the preservation of his Church, must be obvious to every one, from the foregoing premises. We do not, indeed, for our own parts, as I said before, build our faith on these rational congruities, but upon the express promises of CHRIST to his Church; yet, with our adversaries, who give so much to reason, these inferences should carry weight.

AFTER what has been urged in behalf of the Catholic cause, to argue for the fallibility of the Church from reputed actual errors, she is pretended to have fallen into, (which is the Protestants last and principal shift) is no less ridiculous than groundless and illogical. For, besides that, it is begging the point in question; besides that the objection has been, in substance obviated, and implicitly refuted already, I say the reasoning itself is moreover fallacious, unconvincing, and directly derogatory from the divine authorities above alledged. To argue, indeed from a real effect to a cause, or, from an act to a capacity, that is, from the actual exercise of a power to the power itself, is entirely logical and conclusive: thus, for instance, from the act of motion, we conclude the power of motion, and a rational being, from the exercise of reason; and that man must throw up all pretensions to reason and common sense, who takes it into his head to dispute it. But, to argue from a supposed or a doubtful act to an absolute power; or, from a fictitious effect to a real cause, is wholly illogical. Yet this is the case of our Reformers in the present debate, or rather, their case is much worse, while they fasten the character of fallibility on the Church, or a capacity of
erring

erring, upon grounds not only suppositious and imaginary, but in direct contradiction to CHRIST's solemn promise of her infallible capacity. In a word, the Protestant argumentation stands thus; the Church has (to their thinking) actually erred; therefore CHRIST has not vested her with infallibility, and therefore his promises literally importing it, must have a different tendency or meaning.

THE Catholic reasons in a different manner. CHRIST, says he (who being the increated wisdom and truth, can neither deceive, nor be deceived) has absolutely promised to preserve his Church from error, therefore in consequence to this promise, she has not erred, and can not err.

WHICH of these two argumentations is most rational and most Christian, and consequently most conclusive, I submit to every impartial judge. The respective merit of the one and the other will appear still in a clearer light considered in a parallel instance. A Deist reading the sacred writings, contemns the simplicity of the stile, affects to be shocked at the hidden mysteries and the many surprising passages therein contained; and weighing them in the ballance of human understanding, concludes them to be fabulous, or, at least, unworthy of the credit of revealed truths. The Christian on the other hand, being convinced from innumerable marks of credibility, of the revelation of the Scriptures, believes the contents, howsoever surprising and seemingly beyond belief, upon the divine authority.

THE case, I say, between Protestants and us is exactly parallel: CHRIST, as plain as words can speak, has insured the charter of infallibility to his Church; he has moreover constituted her the definitive judge of religious controversies, and has enjoined an unlimited obedience to her decisions. *He, says he, that hears you, hears me; he that despises you, despises me.* St. Luke x. v. 16. And again, *if he does not hear*

the Church, let him be to thee as a beaten, and a publican. Matt. xviii. v. 17.

The Catholic therefore, relying upon the fidelity of CHRIST's promises, is under no apprehension of being led out of the way in taking the Church for his guide; and, in submitting to her, without hesitation or limitation, is convinced that he obeys CHRIST himself in his Church.

THE Protestant, on the contrary, presumes to canvass her decisions, and to try them over again at the private tribunal of his own judgment; and, as one wrong step is generally followed by another, he dares to boggle at some tenets, to discard others, and, upon the issue, to renounce entirely her juridical prerogative: and in order to cover the unwarrantableness of this proceeding, and to give it at least the appearance of a sanction from divine authority, he is under a necessity of misconstruing, or wresting to an alien sense, the clear declarations of CHRIST, which establish and confirm to the Church her charter.

THIS, in epitome, is the whole system of the much-boasted Reformation; but particularly, so far as it affects the article of Church authority; how much short of answering, in any degree, our idea of that pompous title, I appeal to the sense of every man divested of passion and prejudice. For, first, in lieu of bringing her magnified performance to the standard of clear Scripture, that is to the plain word of God, she, at her setting out, and in the most fundamental point, recedes from the obvious literal meaning of the text, to intrude upon us her own forced interpretations, with the visible marks of drift, and design in this unfair dealing. Secondly, instead of calculating her work, for the stability of the Church, and the good of mankind in general, (which is the true and natural idea of a godly Reformation) it is attended with every consequence destructive of these desirable purposes. And this miscarriage gives at once a mortal blow to the Reformation, and clenches the, Catholic cause;
for,

for, the want of weight in their scale, must necessarily throw the ballance into ours. In a word, if the Church cannot be proved to be fallible, she is of consequence in full possession of the contrary prerogative, if the principal indictment has failed, tho' the combined endeavours of wit, disingenuity, and the spirit of innovating have concurred to make it good, all other impeachments of actual errors must be deemed unjust and groundless.

HOWEVER, waving this invincible presumption in our favour, we are ready to put the lesser controversies to the same issue, *viz.* to be tried by the plain words of Scripture; not meaning hereby, as I observed in the beginning, to give up the Church's charter of infallibility, or her right of being the legal arbiter of religious controversies; but, out of condescendance to our adversaries, waving her privilege; flattering ourselves, that their remaining impeachments will appear as defenceless and unwarrantable, at this tribunal, as their principal indictment.

N. B. I HAVE waved an application of the proofs of the Church's prerogative of infallibility to the Roman Catholic Church; that is, to the Church in communion with Rome, as a conclusion, supposed to follow directly from its premises, or implicitly understood. First, because the present contest is only subsisting between the Reformed Churches and her. Secondly, because she is acknowledged to be the Mother Church; the Church from which all the Protestant Churches deserted, and from which they derive the only pretensions they have of being a Church themselves. And lastly and principally, because she both does assert, and always has asserted her claim to infallibility; the Reformers have as constantly and unanimously renounced it, and no other Church ever dared put in for it.

C H A P. II.

The article of Spiritual Supremacy; or, the being of a visible head of the Church, impartially considered and fully proved.

TO the prerogative of the Church's infallibility accedes, next, the spiritual supremacy of her Head, which is the band and cement of unity; because, with him we become *one fold and one shepherd*. John, c. x. v. 16. While these prerogatives subsist, the very attempts towards a Reformation is manifestly temerarious and chimerical; and, in the want of either of them, the constitution of the Church, and the beauty and harmony of its œconomy, would be imperfect: like a kingdom without a ruler, or a city stripped of its bulwarks and fortifications, it would become a prey to, and the scorn and derision of its enemies. For, if she is a fallible Church, she can be reputed no better than the mistress of error, or, as the *blind leading the blind*; the consequence whereof would be, from the asseveration of our blessed Lord, that both she herself, and those she conducts, must sooner or later fall into the pit of perdition; that is, that she must come to inevitable ruin; and, being destitute of a visible head, she is consequently in a state of anarchy and confusion. On the other hand, under the tenure of the first prerogative she is out of the reach of impeachment of error; and, by virtue of the second, her authority is uncontrollable. An invasion on the one is heresy, on the other schism, anathematised by CHRIST as a rebellion of the first magnitude.

WHILE then, the Church makes good these several claims, the authors of the late religious revolutions, instead of reaping the merit of becoming Reformers, can be reputed no better than rebels to their Mother Church, and invaders on her undoubted rights and privileges; and, as long as the Church rests on this
double

double basis, *infallibility* and *supremacy*, 'tis impossible her structure should ever fail, and equally impossible that a pretended Reformation, levelled at its destruction, should ever succeed.

It was therefore manifestly the Reformers interest to leave no stone unmoved in order to undermine this double foundation of their Mother Church; but interest and justice don't always keep pace together, and I hope to prove it to be directly the Reformers case in the point in question.

THE miscarriage and injustice of their undertaking, so far as it was an attempt on the Church's charter of infallibility, is what we have already fully considered, and thoroughly evinced, in the last controversy, from undeniable evidence of Scripture, the Fathers, and from other rational inferences. That the doctrine of supremacy is equally supported by the inspired writings, and strenuously abetted by their faithful interpreters, the primitive Fathers; that is, that there is a visible Head of the Church, constituted by CHRIST as his vicar and representative, and vested by him with an absolute spiritual jurisdiction over the whole body of the Church, will, I apprehend, appear no less evident to every equitable judge, after an unprejudiced perusal of the following extracts from the revealed and ecclesiastical authorities.

SECTION I.

The supremacy of St. PETER, and his successors, proved from clear and positive texts of Scripture.

SAINT PETER was that privileged Apostle whom our blessed Lord was pleased to pitch upon, out of the rest of the college, to be the deputy governor of his Church, and vicar upon earth. His patents are his successors credentials for their pretensions to the same prerogative, and a plain relation of his investiture, from the evangelical history, is our voucher to the

the truth of the fact, and the consequences resulting from it.

AFTER our blessed Saviour had triumphed over death, by his glorious resurrection, he made several visits, for the space of forty days, in his resuscitated state, to his dejected disciples, for the support of their trust in him, as their Messiah and Redeemer; for their comfort under their late dereliction; for their own instruction for the time to come, and for the perpetual instruction of his Church, which was to be founded, by their apostolical labours, to the end of time.

IN the first of these comfortable visits, appearing to the Apostles gathered together, he gave to them, indiscriminately, their Apostolic charge, saying, *As the Father hath sent me, so I also send you, &c.* St. John, ch. 20. v. 21. But, appearing afterwards to St. PETER, St. JOHN, St. JAMES, St. THOMAS, &c. he singled out St. PETER from the rest, and made a triple demand of a profession of his pre-eminent love, saying, SIMON, *lovest thou me more than these?* &c. St. John, ch. 21. v. 15. And, in return for it, gives him a threefold charge of his lambs and sheep; saying, *feed my lambs, feed my sheep, &c.* St. John, ch. 21. v. 15. under which allusions are clearly understood, as we shall presently shew, the whole body of the Church; the pastors and the flock; that is, the subaltern governors and their subjects. This, in effect, was only a confirmation of a prior commission he had given him on that solemn occasion, when he changed his name; telling him, *Thou art PETER, that is a rock, and upon this rock I will build my Church, &c. To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.* Matt. ch. 16. v. 18.

HERE, then, are solemn declarations of CHRIST to St. PETER, which cannot be supposed to be void of a peculiar meaning: the Catholic, and, indeed, the obvious meaning of them, implies a particular and separate commission, to that Apostle, of superintendancy and command: for, to begin with the first quoted text, *Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, &c.* what ever was meant,

meant, what can be meant by those metaphors and allusions in the Scripture language, but the whole body of the Church, comprehended under these several denominations? And therefore our blessed Lord, by commissioning his Apostle to *feed his lambs and sheep*, what else can he be supposed to intend, but that he should look on them as his flock, and they behave to him as their shepherd?

THE circumstances, in which this commission was delivered, confirm our presumption that this, and nothing else, could be the meaning of it: for instance, the circumstance of demanding of this Apostle an extraordinary and pre-eminent degree of love, was but a preparatory and requisite disposition to qualify him for the intended prerogative of becoming deputy governor of his Church, or pastor of his flock, which he himself had loved to such a degree as to lay down his life for its sake; for, by no other token could the Apostle give a proof of his being worthy to succeed to the pastoral charge, than by testifying his love for the head pastor himself, CHRIST JESUS. The other circumstance of CHRIST's singling out St. PETER from the other Apostles and disciples then present, when he delivered to him this respective charge, is a plain indication of a conveyance of a peculiar and distinctive power to him on this solemn occasion; because, as I hinted above, the general Apostolic charge had been imparted in common to him with the rest of his fellow Apostles before, saying to them, *As my Father hath sent me, I also send you, &c.* John, xx. therefore on this other occasion there was a separate and personal commission given, a distinctive prerogative, whereby even they themselves became a part of this Apostle's care.

OUR blessed Lord had insinuated these intentions on another occasion, when he said to him (alluding to his infirmity in denying him just before his passion) SIMON, SIMON, *behold Satan has desired to have thee; but I have*

prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren. Luke, c. 22. v. 31, 32.

As the rest of the Apostles were confirmed in grace by the descent of the Holy Ghost, indiscriminately, upon them all, they were certainly equal to St. PETER in the participation of this gift, as well as in the Apostleship: this direction then of their Lord and Master to him must have some other tendency or meaning; and none else could it be but to give him a distinctive prerogative, by constituting him their head and superior. And it is evident, from several passages of the evangelical history, that they unanimously respected him in this capacity, and that he himself on sundry occasions deputed himself as such. For instance, in the election of St. MATHIAS to the Apostleship, in order to fill up the place of the traitor JUDAS, St. PETER took upon him the speech to the whole assembly, and prescribed the method of election; and the rest acquiesced in his directions: In consequence thereto the lot fell upon MATHIAS, and he was entered into the list of the twelve, a member of the Apostolic college. St. CHRYSOSTOM quotes this act of St. PETER as an undoubted proof and an actual exercise of his superior jurisdiction over his brethren: “ See, says he, how he acknowledges the flock entrusted to him, how he is the prince
“ of the choir; he had reason to act here the first of
“ all with authority, having them all delivered into his
“ hands.” Chrys. Hom. 3. in Act. It is moreover observed, that whenever the Evangelists occasionally give a catalogue of the Apostles, St. PETER is always placed at the head of the list; tho’ neither prerogative of age, nor priority of vocation, entitled him to this precedency; for St. ANDREW was reputed the elder, was the first called to the Apostleship, and was the means of bringing his brother to the participation of the same privilege.

WHAT is still more remarkable, when their Divine Master was called on to pay his tribute to Cæsar, Matth.

xvii. v. 27. he laid down a double stipend, one for himself, another for PETER, taking no notice of the rest of the company, equalling him, as it were, by this token, with himself, and also taking him into a partnership in government.

FROM several other instances, recorded in the Sacred History, besides that I just hinted, upon the election of St. MATHIAS to the Apostleship, it is equally clear that he constantly took upon him the exercise of his prerogative. Thus, after their miraculous illumination, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, He was the first that opened the ministry of the word; the first who dared publicly assert his Master's cause, and to promulgate his law; and the blessing of Heaven seconded his generous zeal; the conversion of three thousand souls following as the first fruits of this first sermon. It was He that took upon him the defence of his fellow Apostles against the insurrections and malicious cavils of the invidious Jews. The first miracle, in confirmation of the truth of the Gospel, was wrought by St. PETER. The vocation of the Gentiles was revealed to him. He was the first sent on the employ: and the conversion of CORNELIUS the Centurion was the first fruits of Gentility and darkness, brought to the light of truth thro' his means.

Now, I put the question again; Can all these distinctions shewn to this Apostle be without a particular meaning? And what meaning can we fix upon them but what they import in their own nature singly, or as collected and compared one with the other, of supposing St. PETER to be the Head of the sacred college, constituted such by CHRIST, and acknowledged as such by the rest of the Apostles?

AND, if we look back on the other solemn declaration made to this Apostle, *thou art a rock, &c.* and the promise annexed to it, *to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, &c.* Matt. c. xvi. v. 18, 19. These connected together, the natural import of the words, and their concomitant circumstances, concur to

establish his undoubted prerogative: for, at this time, our blessed Lord drew out the plan of his Church; he himself being the corner or fundamental stone, appoints this Apostle as a part of the foundation, or the stone resting upon himself, and on which the whole superstructure was to depend, *upon this rock will I build my Church*; and in consequence to this he delivers to him the keys; which, in the metaphorical language of the Scripture, ever denotes superintendency, command, and a deputation of power.

To object to the first part of this text, that the Church was built on St. PETER's faith, and not on his person, as it is a mere arbitrary interpretation of the words, wresting them from their natural import and meaning, so it has been often answered beyond a reply, that, though St. PETER's faith (as ABRAHAM's faith heretofore) was the meritorious cause of the respective promises made by Almighty GOD to one and the other, yet the promises themselves were undoubtedly given to their persons; viz. to ABRAHAM, that he should be the Father of nations; to St. PETER, that he, CHRIST, would build his Church upon him. In this sense, as we shall presently shew, the holy Fathers universally understood them; and, indeed, words must be divested of their proper and natural signification, if the text is to be tortured and misconstrued into any other meaning.

BUT now, supposing this Apostle's prerogative clear and beyond dispute, it remains still to prove it hereditary to his successors; which indeed, is the heart of the cause, and, if left undecided; we shall still continue in a state of darkness and uncertainty.

As a preliminary towards clearing up this point I must premise, what is well deserving our notice, that there has been a lineal descent of supreme Pastors from St. PETER in an uninterrupted succession to this day; which is the more remarkable, since the same cannot be traced from any other member of the Apostolic college, and is a plain manifestation of CHRIST's extraordinary

dinary and perpetual providence over his Church in this particular. Our adversaries have been so far aware of the notoriety of this succession, as a fact not to be contested, and of the natural consequences flowing from it, *viz.* of St. PETER's prerogative being entailed on his descendants, and becoming, as it were, their legal and natural inheritance; that, precisely on this account, they have made it their principal business to impugn this Apostle's personal right; but, how vainly, we have already and shall immediately further shew. In a word, St. PETER's right cannot be shook, being founded on CHRIST's indefeasible promises; his successors claim to the prerogative is in right of him, and rests upon the same stable foundation.

THE arguments urged in the last controversy for the extension of CHRIST's promises of the Church's infallibility to the end of the world, plead equally for the perpetuity of St. PETER's supremacy to his successors; for similar, or rather identical causes produce identical effects; *to wit*, the constitution and government of the Church was to subsist to the end of the world; CHRIST's divine ordinances and institutions regarding his Church were not temporary, that is, were not limited to the Apostles time, nor to their persons: It is ridiculous to imagine it, and inconsistent with our idea of his paternal, omniscient providence over his Church; therefore what privileges CHRIST gave to his Church at one time, sealed and insured by his never-failing promise, belong to her at all times, and are her inherent prerogative; and, by parity of reason, and in virtue of the like positive promises of CHRIST, St. PETER's prerogative becomes his successors inheritance.

I forbear to tire the reader with an unnecessary repetition of our foregoing many proofs, these hints, with the application of what we offered before, we flatter ourselves may be satisfactory to an unprejudiced reader; and whatever else might be added would be insufficient to convince a person biassed by passion and interest alone against all reason.

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HOWEVER, the sentiments of the ancient Fathers on this material point must not be passed over in silence; for, tho' the method I proposed in the management of the subject of this essay will not permit me to enlarge on these irrefragable testimonies, yet the deference we owe to them, and even self-interest, will not allow me to omit them intirely. The authority of the Fathers is what all parties must respect, and, for our own part, we are so confident of their being wholly on our side of the question, that we are proud to own it manifestly our interest to put the issue of the debate to their decision. I'll content myself with selecting, out of a cloud of these uncontestable evidences, two or three who must be reputed unexceptionable for their authority and antiquity.

OF these St. IRENÆUS is one of the most ancient, living in the next age to the Apostles, whose verdict cannot be refused. Now this great man, addressing the Roman Church, gives the following testimony to the supremacy of her Head, as ample as the most sanguine adherent to her interest could pronounce at this time of day. "By Apostolical tradition, which the Roman Bishops have preserved, all separatists are confounded; for, to this Church, by reason of its more powerful principality, 'tis necessary that all Churches have recourse." St. Irenæus, l. iii. c. 3. The most professed zealot for the Papacy could not, as I said, assert its prerogative in more full and expressive terms.

St. CYPRIAN, whose suffrage is as unexceptionable, both for his antiquity and his merit, as the former, living in the third age, and dying a glorious martyr in the defence of truth, writing to the holy Pope of that time, St. CORNELIUS, who also sealed his faith with the effusion of his blood, he styles *Rome* "the chair of St. PETER, and the principal Church from which the unity of priesthood is derived. Cypr. Ep. iv. ad Corn.

St. HIEROM

St. HIEROM also addresses Pope DAMASUS in the following strong and emphatical terms, "I am joined in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the chair of PETER; upon this rock I know the Church is built. Whoever eats the lamb out of this house is profane: whosoever is not in the ark shall perish in the deluge." Hier. Ep. 57. ad Damas.

St. AMBROSE observes, "That ANDREW followed CHRIST sooner than PETER, yet that ANDREW did not receive the principality, but PETER." Ambr. in 2 Cor. xii.

St. AUSTIN tells the Donatists, "that in the See of Rome the principality of the Catholic Church was ever acknowledged." Aug. Ep. 162.

St. CHRYSOSTOM's sentiments on this head are evident from what we have quoted from him already on the election of St. MATHIAS; and he is consonant to himself, in this point, on many other occasions, which for brevity's sake I pass over.

But the words of St. OPTATUS MILEVITANUS to PARMENION, a Donatist Prelate, are too remarkable to be omitted. "You can't pretend, says he to him, to be ignorant that St. PETER held the first episcopal chair in the city of Rome, in which Peter, head of all the Apostles sat: in which one chair, unity might be maintained by all, lest the rest of the Apostles should each claim his own separate chair; so that he is now a Schismatic, and an offender, who erects another against this single chair. In this one chair, which is the first of the properties of the Church, PETER first sat: to him succeeded LINUS: to him CLEMENT, &c. Give you now an account of the origin of your chair; you, who claim to yourselves the Holy Church." St. Optat, Meliv. lib. ii. cont. Parm.

I'll conclude the quotations from these ancient irrefragable vouchers for the supremacy, with a short extract out of an emphatical discourse on this subject, spoken on the eve of the feast of St. PETER, by EU-

CHERIUS Bishop of Lyons, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century. "First CH RIST entrusted him " with his lambs, next with his sheep; because he " made him not only a shepherd, *but the shepherd of* " *shepherds*. PETER then feeds the lambs, he also " feeds the sheep, he feeds both the young and the " mother, *he rules both subjects and prelates*; he is there- " fore a shepherd over all; for, besides lambs and " sheep there is nothing in the Church."

THESE are a few of the innumerable testimonies from antiquity for the Catholic doctrine on the subject under debate, which the more clear and undeniable, the more steadfast the Church's tenure, so well supported. For, as the Scripture is the test we have agreed to appeal to in this controversy; so the ancient Fathers, as I observed before, must be allowed to be the faithful and most unexceptionable interpreters of these sacred records; and therefore, while they are so evidently on our side of the question, the cause of the Reformation must be owned to be here also deficient; and every thing they pretend to oppose to the Church's charter for the supremacy, is to be reputed no more than mere chicaneries and idle evasions, or, at best, but as negative arguments against positive proofs: such is their inference from St. PAUL's reproofing St. PETER at Antioch for his separating himself from the converted Gentiles, out of a mistaken condescension to the Jewish proselytes. A superior may be liable to an error in judgment; and in this case, it is neither unusual nor unbecoming an inferior to admonish him of his mistake: and therefore, from St. PAUL's zeal on the occasion mentioned, no consequence can be drawn in prejudice to St. PETER's *Primacy*. And he is in as little danger of forfeiting his prerogative from the groundless surmise, which has come into the heads of our modern Reformers, of this Apostle's not presiding in the Council of Jerusalem, nor from other like objections, equally trivial and undeserving our notice.

Now, as our adversaries must be judged, from the premises, to have failed in their principal plea, and what, in this debate, by their own rule, should be the decisive tribunal, the clear words of Scripture; it is to be expected, at least, as I observed in the foregoing controversy, that they produce invincible reasons from the nature of the thing in further support of their opposition, in order to its retaining the shadow or appearance of a godly Reformation. How far they have failed of coming up to these just expectations we will now examine.

SECTION II.

The Supremacy further evinced, from reason and prescriptive possession, in a continual succession of pastors from St. PETER, constantly asserting their prerogative: and the opposition proved to be destitute of every foundation, either from authority or reason.

THE ringleader of the Reformation, MARTIN LUTHER, when he renounced his obedience to the Church and its Head; in order to screen himself from the imputation of being a rebel, was under a necessity of impugning the Church in her two fundamental articles of Infallibility and Supremacy. It had, indeed, been more for his own credit, and for the reputation of the Reformation in general, if he had managed his opposition and vented his resentment with more temper, charity, and humility than it is known he did. Even his great panegyrist, Dr. TILLOTSON, unwarily allows him to be “a bold, rough man,” tho’ he deems him a fit wedge for the knotty work he had in hand; a character better becoming a hero of the bear-garden, than an Apostle or Reformer. And it is certain that his violent, outrageous and insolent behaviour favoured very little of the spirit of the Gospel, and of that meekness so much recommended by our Divine Master in words and example, and strictly fol-

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lowed by all who ever engaged in the Apostolical charge.

BUT, laying aside personal reflections, we will proceed to examine into the merits of the cause. The great man, whom I just named, Archbishop TILLOTSON, speaking of the point in debate, the article of the Supremacy, confidently pronounces the following judgment upon it: He says, that "It is not only an
" indefensible, but an impudent cause as ever was undertaken: that there is not any tolerable argument
" for it, and a thousand invincible arguments against
" it: that the histories and records of all ages are a
" perpetual demonstration against it." Tillot. Serm. xlix. p. 588. A modern author is pleased to deliver himself, on the subject, with a similar assurance, tho' both the one and the other are as destitute of proofs, as their assertion is wide from truth: but railing is a compendious way of managing a bad cause. Bold assertions occasionally supply the want of proofs with credulous readers, who take what is told them upon the word and credit of their teachers, without further examination: But whatsoever these swaggering declaimers are pleased to roar out against us, we are not to be silenced with noise; nor will powder and smoke scare us; and therefore, in answer to this hectoring challenge, we are bold to say, That we have not only *tolerable* but *convincing arguments* on the Catholic side of the question; and that what is insinuated by our opponents against it, is no more than mere sophistry or slander.

FIRST, its divine institution, which we have already proved from clear evidences of the New Testament, we think to be an *invincible argument* for the Supremacy: secondly, the suffrages of the primitive Fathers, which we have just produced, are such proofs, as, in common modesty, every one ought to submit to; and therefore shows our cause not to be an *impudent indefensible cause*, when supported by such unexceptionable authorities: thirdly, prescriptive possession, which by the concessions of our adversaries we have had for
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many hundred years, and, by our own calculation (as we have proved already and shall further) from the establishment of Christianity, makes it clear that all *histories and records* are so far from being a *demonstration against it*, that they are, on the contrary, unanimous vouchers for the justice of our pretensions.

WHAT I have already remarked of the lineal descent of the head pastors of the Church in a continual succession from St. PETER, which cannot be traced from any of the rest of the Apostles, is a visible instance of the peculiar Providence of Heaven in preserving this succession, and of the accomplishment of CHRIST's promises made to St. PETER, when he constituted him his vicar or deputy governor of his Church.

THIS was one of the prevailing motives which kept St. AUSTIN within the pale of the Catholic Church. His words are very remarkable, "A succession, says he, of Bishops from the see of St. PETER, (to whom CHRIST, after his resurrection, committed his flock) to the present episcopacy, holds me in the Catholic communion." St. Aust. lib. iii. cont. epist. fund. ch. 3. And that the successors of St. PETER have, from the beginning and at all times, asserted their prerogative of Spiritual Supremacy, will appear evident from the following plain and uncontestable facts, which are only a few out of the many that *histories and records of every age* furnishes us with.

IN the next age to the Apostles St. VICTOR, as we gather from ecclesiastical history, sitting at that time in St. PETER's chair, intimidated the Churches of Lesser Asia with menaces of excommunication for their undue celebration of Easter. Euseb. lib. v. c. 24. Now this act must be undoubtedly reputed an exercise of his superior jurisdiction over those Churches.

IN the third age St. STEPHEN, Pope, acted with the same vigour, in the exercise of his authority, on the occasion of the then controverted point about the validity of heretical baptism.

THE great council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451, in their epistle to the Pope, stile him, "their father and their head," Tom. iv. conc. p. 833. & seq. which, if it be not acknowledging his supremacy, words cannot express it, or must be divested of their proper and natural meaning.

St. GELASIUS, Pope, who lived in the fifth century, asserts the supremacy of his see from the appointment of CHRIST, and his promise so often alledged to St. PETER, *Thou art PETER, and upon this rock will I build my Church.* Tom. iv. conc. lab. p. 1261. E.

To omit a cloud of other witnesses which the reader may have recourse to in sundry treatises on this subject, I'll conclude with the words of one of the Pope's legates opening his commission to the General Council of Ephesus, An. 341. "No one, says he, doubts, nay, it is a thing known to all ages, that St. PETER (Prince and Head of the Apostles, who is the pillar of faith, and the foundation of the Catholic Church) received from CHRIST the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and had the power of binding and loosing sins given him; and who to this time, and always, lives in his successors, and exercises his authority: whose canonical successors, Pope CELESTIN, holding his place, has sent us to this council to represent his person." Acts 3. conc. Epes. T. 3. conc. lab. p. 626. A.

ALSO in the General Council of Chalcedon, consisting of 520 Bishops, An. 451, the legates of St. LEO, in deposing DIOSCORUS, stile St. PETER, "the rock and foundation of the Church." Acts 3. T. 4. p. 425. C. D.

Now as this is the literal sense, or the very words, of that Apostle's instalment in his prerogative, Matt. c. xvi. v. 18. as these councils are admitted for oecumenical by our adversaries, as the Fathers of the councils were so far from contesting these solemn declarations, or disputing the Pope's prerogative, that they submitted to his authority, and acquiesced in the decisions

decisions of his representatives; what can we conclude from all these evidences but that the supremacy of St. PETER and his successors was the universal sense and belief of the whole Catholic world at that early and pure age of the Church; and that, therefore, our adversaries, in pretending to date the epoch of supremacy from PHOCAS the emperor, and his flattery to the bishop of Rome then sitting in the chair, fabulously and maliciously contradict the foregoing testimonies, which deduce it from the earliest times, that is, from the birth of Christianity? and Dr. Tillotson must also be strangely mistaken, or, what is worse, as he cannot be supposed to be a stranger to the avowed historical facts of those ancient times, must be passionately prejudiced, and as unsincere and disingenuous as his brethren, in averring, “That the histories and records of all ages are a perpetual demonstration against it.”

THEY, with as little foundation, raise their clamours against the pretended exorbitant power of the papacy: they may affect to represent it in the most odious light, as a despotic, arbitrary and tyrannical usurpation: invectives will go down with the credulous vulgar, and puzzling the question may set their adherents at rest, in leaving it, like a drawn battle, undecided; but can never touch the heart of the cause. For, it is not what they please to impose on our belief, or even what may be the particular sentiments of an indiscreet zealot, or the private opinion of a single divine or two of the Catholic Church, which we are obliged to maintain, or undertake to contend for. What we assert, is, that there is a visible head of the Church constituted by CHRIST as his Vicar, who is the centre of unity, or the means by which we become together, as united and subordinate to him, *one fold and one shepherd*, St. John, c. x. v. 16.

THIS we look upon as a providential blessing calculated for the preservation of the Church. The jurisdiction we attribute to this pastor is purely spiritual, abstracted from all temporal pretensions, or imaginary encroach-

encroachments. This infine, is the system of our belief in this point, delivered in our professions of faith, and set forth in all our catechisms, as the terms of communion; and is what, I hope, I have sufficiently evinced in the foregoing premises from the divine institution, the primitive fathers, and the prescriptive possession of the Church from the foundation of Christianity. In consequence hereto, the opposition of our adversaries must appear to be as manifestly destitute of every support from Scripture, authority of the Fathers, or reason; and as it sprung from the machinations of pride and rebellion, so it evidently keeps up and nourishes, the same spirit.

Our first parents forfeited their original justice, and their settlement in the terrestrial paradise, by aiming at independency, in listening to the infernal tempter, telling them, *you shall be as Gods*, Gen. c. iii. v. 5. and by a like levelling principal our pretended Reformers shut themselves out of the pale of the Church. An absolute independance, and a liberty of thinking and acting as they should please, was what they equally aimed at, and effectually introduced, by discarding the articles of infallibility and supremacy. The unavoidable consequence of this step was confusion, disorder, and a total destruction of unity. So that instead of correcting abuses and banishing errors, (which is the natural idea of a godly Reformation) they laid the foundation of every abuse, opened a gap to latitudinarianism and deism, and established a state of anarchy.

C H A P. III.

The Article of the Real Presence of CHRIST's Body and Blood, in the blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, considered.

AMONG the tenets of the Catholic Church, which the authors and abettors of the Reformation have thought fit to brand with the imputation of error, the article of the real presence of CHRIST's Body and Blood in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist may be reputed one of the most fundamental; because on the resolution of this single question is to be determined whether the impeachment of idolatry, which many of the Reformers are fond of fastening upon us, for our adoration of CHRIST as really present in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, has any appearance of equity and reason; or whether, on the contrary, we have not an undoubted right to retort the charge of ingratitude on them, as well as infidelity, for disbelieving and rejecting so singular and ineffable a blessing.

BUT be our case, in this contested point, what it will, we have a principal and leading part of the Reformation to bear us company. For LUTHER, the first patriarch of the Reformation, with his followers, is as sanguine for the real presence as the most zealous, Catholic; and though, in explaining the mystery by his whim of an impanation, or a consubstantiation of the Bread with CHRIST's Body, in lieu of a transubstantiation, or, a change of the substances, which is the Catholic belief, he renders it more irreconcilable to reason, and unintelligible; yet he agrees with us in the main point of a real and corporal presence; and which is the very heart of the difficulty, in which it becomes a stumbling block and stone of offence to the rest of the Reformers. And such is his condescension in regard to the Catholic tenet, as to think the diversity of opi-
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nions between him and us to be a matter of indifference. "I have taught, says he, heretofore, and yet sustain, that it avails little, and is a question of no great moment, whether we believe the bread to remain or not, in the Eucharist, or to be transubstantiated." *Luth. de Cæn. dom. contra. Zuin.* But, it is certain that he does not shew himself so well affected to his dissenting brethren, the abettors of the figurative and symbolical system, whom, on this head, he lashes with the severest censures and bitterest imprecations. In his *Confessio Parva*, wrote about a year before he died, he calls them, "Blasphemers against God and CHRIST, a pack of liars, cursed, proud and arrogant spirits; bread-eaters, wine-drinkers, soul-murderers!" and in a tract wrote some while after the former, and when he was nearer his end, he repeats and confirms his aforesaid sentiments in terms equally home and significant, "we seriously think, says he, the ZUINGLIANS and all the Sacramentarians, to be Hereticks, and separated from God's Church, who deny the Body and Blood of CHRIST to be taken in the mouth of our body, in the blessed Sacrament." *Luth. Thes. cont. Iovan Thes. ii.*

IN consequence to these material differences subsisting between the Reformers, the following apposite questions obviously occur. First, I would desire to know of Dr. TILLOTSON, or any other panegyrist of this head patriarch of the Reformation, how their hero's honour and orthodoxy is to be saved in this controverted point? for if Catholics are here reprobable, how is he, who is in the same belief, as far as it is an object of exception and offence to them, to be excused? and though his bold attack on the papacy may gloss over his smaller slips, yet if the article in question, be a gross error and damnable idolatry, as our opponents pretend, he is confessedly guilty of it, and therefore must be judged either to have wanted sagacity and inspiration to discover the error, or courage to impugn it: blemishes of too black

black a dye to be admitted into the character of a head Reformer.

I WOULD also beg leave to put one other question : Is the Reformation a human or divine work ? That is, is it to be deemed a mere human device and invention, or as inspired and conducted by the Holy Ghost ? They cannot, for shame, adopt it under the first notion ; because, being put on that footing, its credit sinks, and forfeits at once its pretension to an evangelical or godly Reformation ; and, yet, on the other hand, for a work inconsistent with itself to come from God, is shocking to think, and blasphemy to utter. No, a fabrick composed of incoherent parts cannot have Almighty God for its architect. The spirit of wisdom and truth could not possibly inspire contradictions, such as are the diversity of opinions among the Reformers in the present controversy ; *viz.* a *Real Corporal Presence*, tenaciously defended by LUTHER : a bare *Remembrance or Commemoration* asserted by ZUINGLIUS : A refinement on both by CALVIN in his figurative Symbolical System : and an unintelligible jargon of a Real non-corporal presence maintained by the Church of England. The HOLY GHOST, I say, could not inspire such contradictions ; if one system be true, the others must be undoubtedly false, or rather all equally so, the products of innovating brains, big with invention. And in whatsoever other points these differences amongst the Reformers occur, the same unanswerable objections return upon them. 'Tis the Catholic Church alone, which having the HOLY GHOST, the Spirit of Truth, for its guide, is always consistent with itself, uniform, and unvariable in its doctrine ; and therefore, leaving the Reformers to patch up and adjust their own differences as they can, I'll pursue my first design to vindicate the Catholic tenet from the imputation of error, by the standard of faith, which they themselves pretend to appeal to, the clear words of Scripture.

To this test then I put the issue of the present controversy of the real presence, by asserting a transubstantiation, or a substantial change of bread and wine into the sacred Body and Blood of CHRIST in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; in which sense it is the object of our faith, and one of the terms of a Catholic communion; and which I flatter myself to make good, in the following section, against the cavils of our adversaries, from uncontestable evidences of the word of God.

SECTION I.

Transubstantiation evinced from clear Scripture.

THE justest and most natural appeal we can make in the present controversy, and what deserves our preferable attention to every other proof, (as Scripture is the test by which our cause is to be tried) will be, I apprehend, to the words of the institution itself of this august Sacrament; because every other proof rests on this basis, and derives its merit and efficacy from it. The institution of the blessed Eucharist is admitted by all hands to have been our blessed Lord's last act and deed, in taking a farewell of his beloved disciples, just as he was entering on the tragical scene of his bitter passion. It was, moreover, a declaration of his will and testament to his friends, and a legacy or earnest of his love, affection, and esteem, to continue with them after his impending separation.

THE singularity and solemnity of each of these circumstances, obviously raise our expectations of some extraordinary event, and some signal testimonies of his friendship: for, as a parting adieu, it must have been most kind and endearing, coming from the heart of an Incarnate Deity, overflowing with love for his intimate friends, from whom he was going to be violently forced away: as a will and testament it should, according to the nature of such deeds, be clear and intelligible; and, as a legacy, it could not fail of being
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such as would be worthy of the infinite munificence and benevolence of the donor, and such as would redound to the emolument of the receivers, and be to them a perpetual memorial of their divine benefactor. And, we cannot be so injurious to our blessed Lord, as to doubt of his fulfilling these expectations in every respect, and to their full extent : Therefore to the words of the institution of this august Sacrament we willingly put the issue of this debate.

The sacred Penmen, the Evangelists, are they from whom we have the relation of this memorable transaction, uniform, plain, and unaffected, in the following words : *Jesus took bread into his hands, blessed and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take ye and eat : This is my Body : and blessing the chalice, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many, unto the remission of sins.* Matt. xxvi. 25, 28. So St. MATTHEW, and the rest, in identical, or equivalent and synonymous terms, St. LUKE expressing the consecration of the chalice with this variation, still, if possible, more significant, *This is the chalice, the New Testament in my Blood, which shall be shed for you.* Luke xxii. 20.

THESE then are the words of the institution ; plain, undisguised, and expressive ; from which I draw the following natural and obvious inferences : First, that the literal and obvious meaning of the words import a conveyance of CHRIST's body and blood, and a substantial change of bread and wine into them, to this effect : Secondly, I aver this to be so clear, that, supposing it, for argument's sake, to have been a disputable point, and hitherto undetermined, yet in the hypothesis that our blessed Lord had intended at that time to operate this miraculous change, and to make a conveyance of his Body and Blood to his disciples, he could not have delivered himself in more clear, expressive and significant terms than he did ; and therefore, without the most invincible, demonstrative arguments to disprove it, the literal interpretation ought to take

place, and influence us into a stedfast belief, that this was the real intent and meaning of our Lord and Master, and no objections from the information of our senses (as I shall shew hereafter) can be admitted to be of sufficient weight to over-rule these plain, positive assertions of eternal truth. I infer, thirdly, that LUTHER's system of a consubstantial presence of CHRIST's body with the elements of bread and wine, is wholly arbitrary, and inconsistent with the tenor of the text; because, in this sense the meaning of the words of the institution must stand thus, *This bread is my body*; which proposition is an absolute contradiction, literally understood, importing one thing to be another, viz. *Bread to be CHRIST's body*, and therefore directly impossible. Had indeed our blessed Saviour delivered himself in these terms, *Here is my body*; in this case a concomitant presence of his sacred body with the elements, by some mystical union possible to the Divine Power, might have been inferred from it, without implying the like contradiction; but, as our blessed Lord did not express himself in this manner, the Catholic sense ought to prevail; and the literal import of the words, as the sacred text stands, convey no other idea.

I INFER lastly and principally, against our chief adversaries, the abettors of the figurative and symbolical sense, that this system is still more arbitrary, and an absolute alienation and torture of the words from their natural meaning; and as it explains the words of the institution, *This is my body*, to this effect, *This is the sign or figure of my body*, is a manifest breach of, and a direct violence on the common laws of speech: for, tho' a known and adopted sign, allowed as such by general use, is often called by the name of the thing it signifies; as, pointing to a picture of the king, we say, *That is the king*; meaning that it represents his royal person; yet to give a foreign word or thing such an allusion (being disproportioned, and unfit in itself to signify what it is intended to mean) without previously preparing the hearer, by letting him
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into our meaning, would be an abuse of words, and an impropriety of speech, and wholly unintelligible. Thus, for instance, was any one to determine within himself that a pebble should signify a diamond, and pursuant to this settled idea, without communicating it to any one else, should, pointing to a pebble, say, *That is a diamond*; his language would be unintelligible and ridiculous. And I beg leave to say, that, in the present case, our blessed Saviour's calling *bread* his *body*, &c. (figuratively understood, meaning only the sign of his body) without a previous declaration of this his meaning, is liable to the same censure of being a speech quite improper and unnatural, and would have been an imposition on the understanding of his Apostles, to whom he directed his discourse; and therefore we cannot offer such an indignity to his goodness and wisdom, as to impute to him so gross an absurdity. Our blessed Lord, on an occasion, exhorting his disciples to fly to the Divine assistance in all their exigencies, as an insurance of success, encouraged them by this familiar example: *Which of you, says he, if he ask his father bread, will he give him a stone? or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?* Luke xi. 11. From whence he infers, that his eternal Father will much less deceive them, whenever they have recourse to him. And now, can we believe that he himself, the identical image of his eternal Father's goodness, love, and sincerity, would on this occasion trifle with his intimate friends, and lead them into the grossest mistake; to wit, that at the time that he was delivering to them his last will and testament, and depositing with them a parting legacy, which he expressly declared to be his sacred Body and Blood, that, I say, in this solemn act of consummate friendship, he would impose upon them a piece of bread, as a mere figure and sign of his Body, in lieu of its truth and reality, in direct contradiction to his said express declaration; and this without giving them the least previous intimation of his private and hidden meaning? Yet these consequences,
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and many others of the same nature, as directly flow from our adversaries figurative or symbolical system, as they are shocking to every honest heart, and even to common sense, and are injurious to the goodness, wisdom, and veracity of an incarnate Deity, and our most loving Redeemer.

BUT, for the same reason that a previous intimation of his meaning had been requisite for the Apostles, if he had intended to be understood in the figurative sense, in order to undeceive them, and to screen himself from the imputation of imposing upon them; for this reason, the literal import of the words was neither shocking to them nor a matter of surprise; because our blessed Lord, had, long before, prepared them for the accomplishment of this mystery, by positively promising to bequeath to them his Body and Blood, as their spiritual food and nourishment; and therefore, what he did at his last Supper, was no more than what they had long expected: the manner in which he did it, of giving it them under the veils of the elementary species, was least repugnant to human sense; and the truth or reality of the fact, that is, the effectual change of the elements into his Body and Blood (after having seen him convert water into wine, and work innumerable other changes and prodigies) they could have no room to doubt of. For, tho' this present change was not evident to their senses, their Divine Master's positive declaration of the fact, supported by prior motives of credibility, was a sufficient warrant for the truth of it, without any other testimony.

It is from the sixth chapter of St. John that we gather this prior promise of our blessed Lord to his disciples, of giving them his Flesh for their spiritual nourishment, and is a corroborative proof of the literal sense of the institution. The words are these: *The bread I will give is my Flesh, for the life of the world: Amen, I say unto you, except you eat the Flesh of the son of man, and drink his Blood, you shall not have life in you:*

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He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood has life everlasting. St. John vi. 52, 54, 55.

Now the literal import of these texts contains a manifest prediction, and absolute promise of the Divine legacy, viz. of CHRIST's Flesh and Blood, which he bequeathed afterwards to his Apostles at his last supper; and therefore his fulfilling this promise at that time, as I said before, could be no subject of surprise, or matter of doubt.

BUT when the rest of the company, who were present with the Apostles at the uttering of this unexpected speech, understanding it in a carnal sense, affected to be shocked and scandalised at it; saying, *How can this man give us his Flesh to eat, and his Blood to drink.* John, c. vi. v. 56. Did our blessed Saviour disabuse them of their error, as in charity to their misapprehending him, if he had only meant a figurative or symbolical conveyance and manducation, it might be expected he would, and might easily have done; and as he effectually did undeceive them, (as I shall presently shew) with regard to their mistake of the manner of the conveyance of his flesh to them. On the contrary, as to the substance of the promise, he confirms it with the solemnest asseveration; *My flesh, says he, is meat indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed: he that eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood abideth in me and I in him.* John, c. vi. v. 56, 57. And when this incredulous audience still continued inflexible to the solemn asseverations of eternal Truth, and departed upon it, muttering to themselves, and calling them *A hard saying, who can hear it,* John, c. vi. v. 61. Our blessed Lord hereupon, turning to his Apostles, said, *And will you also leave me?* John vi. 67. But they, instead of joining in the infidelity of the others, made the following generous profession of their faith; *We believe,* said they, *and have known that thou art the son of God;* John, c. vi. v. 69; which was as much as to say, that how much soever his declarations and promises were surpassing human comprehension, yet they believed them possible

possible to his omnipotent power, and therefore had no reluctance in assenting to the feasibility and veracity of his promises then, and were as little prompted to discredit the actual accomplishment of them afterwards.

HOWEVER, it is objected, by our adversaries to this whole passage, that our blessed Saviour himself, on this occasion, qualified and limited his own saying to a spiritual sense, by adding, that *It is the spirit which quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing, the words I speak to you, they are spirit and life*; John c. vi. v. 64 from which they pretend to conclude an exclusion of a corporal conveyance and manducation. But however fond, the abettors of a figurative or symbolical sense, may be of this text, in laying a great stress upon it; St. AUSTIN, in his comment on these words, has obviated the objection, and refuted it to my hands. “What then, says he, is the meaning of this; *The flesh profiteth nothing*? as they, the Jews, understood it, as torn to pieces in a dead body, it profiteth nothing; but it profiteth animated by the spirit.” St. Aug. in psalm 98. That is to say, as this doctor further explains himself, dead flesh cut in the shambles (in which carnal sense the Jews apprehended our blessed Saviour’s saying, and were charitably disabused by him of their error) “it profiteth nothing; but it profiteth as animated by the spirit.

In a word, though it be a corporeal substance which we receive in the Sacrament, viz. CHRIST’S sacred Body and Blood; yet it is conveyed in a spiritual manner: spiritual, because under another appearance, being couched under the veils of bread and wine, and thereby the object of faith, and out of the reach of our senses: spiritual, because bequeathed to us, not for our corporal but spiritual nourishment: spiritual in all the qualities of it, not being confined to the laws of natural bodies, commensuration as to place and extension: spiritual as to its endowments, being impassible, immortal, incorruptible, &c. But had

St. AUSTIN

ST. AUSTIN been of the Reformers opinion and belief of a figurative symbolical sense, he certainly went round about the bush in refuting the Jews misapprehension in the manner he did; since he might have gone nearer to work, in referring CHRIST's words to a figurative meaning: and, as he did not, it is a proof, amongst many others we shall presently produce, that he was a zealous abettor of the Catholic doctrine.

IN this passage of St. John, c. vi. we have heard our blessed Saviour confirm the literal sense of the institution of the Sacrament of his Body and Blood; or rather, previously declare it in the most express and positive terms; and when his hearers affected to be shocked at these declarations, so far was he from revoking them, that he confirmed them by the most solemn asseverations, saying, *My flesh is meat indeed, my Blood is drink indeed.* We have also seen that the Apostles, his faithful adherents, instead of joining with the incredulous disciples, or even questioning their Divine Master about the possibility of this mystery, though they were every now and then importunate with him for the explanation of his parables, and some dogmatical points much less material; yet here they gave an implicit assent to this mysterious promise: nor does it appear from any part of the New Testament, or from any records of the transactions of the Apostles, that they ever varied a tittle from it. I appeal to St. PAUL, to whom our adversaries can have no exception, for the sentiments of the whole Apostolic body.

THIS great Apostle then, writing to the Corinthians, after having recited to them the sacred words of the institution of this adorable Sacrament, with his Divine Master's ordinance of repeating it in remembrance of him, that is, as a memorial of his death and passion: he concludes by enforcing his Master's injunction, in these emphatic words: *As often, says he, as you shall eat this Bread, and drink this Chalice, you shall declare the death of our Lord till he comes: therefore,*

whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread, and drink the Chalice unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himſelf, not diſcerning the Body of the Lord: Ep. 1 ad Cor. xi. 26, 27, 29. that is, not remembering that he is eating the real Body of CHRIST.

Now whereas this was a dogmatical Epistle, it is presumed that, in a point of ſo great moment as was the eſſence of this auguſt Sacrament, which the Apoſtle occaſionally touched upon, he would have been clear and explicit; and yet beſides his recital of the words of the inſtitution, without adding any gloſs or comment to give it a figurative meaning, (which is a tacit intimation of his contrary belief) his reiterated charge on the unworthy receiver, of being guilty of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, is a corroborative proof of his ſtedfaſt belief of a corporal preſence. For, in this ſenſe, it is eaſily underſtood how the unworthy receiver is guilty of the abuſe and profanation of CHRIST's Body and Blood. In this ſenſe it is literally true that he puts a direct affront and inſult on CHRIST's ſacred Perſon: whereas in the other ſyſtem it is merely indirect and reſpective, as every other breach of the commandments is an offence againſt Almighty God, and every violation of a law is a reſpective affront offered to the legiſlator.

OUR adverſaries affect to oppoſe to theſe ſtrong proofs, from this great Apoſtle, for the real preſence, his calling the elements by their proper names after their conſecration. But firſt this objection, to mean what our adverſaries would have it, *viz.* that the elements are not changed after conſecration, muſt make the Apoſtle unſay all he had been ſaying before, and invalidate the ſtrength of his charge againſt the unworthy receiver of being guilty of the (profanation of the) Body and Blood of CHRIST. The objection, I apprehend, is alſo in itſelf trifling and merely eluſive; for nothing is more uſual in common ſpeech than to call a thing what it had been, before it

it received its change. Holy writ itself furnishes us with several instances. Thus it is said to ADAM, *dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return.* Gen. iii. 19. AARON's rod being changed into a serpent, still retained the name of a rod: *they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents, but AARON's rod swallowed up their rods.* Exod. vii. 12. And even the Catholic Church, which cannot be supposed to disavow her own tenet, often calls the consecrated elements by their former names. Of this nature there are figures in discourse allowable from common use: thus amongst the Jews, in the familiar dialect of their language, an entertainment was called breaking of bread, as amongst us it is usual to invite a friend to drink a bottle; and yet a man must have a very mean opinion of his friend's sense and understanding, or be next to an idiot himself to offer to explain his meaning,

BUT we need not go any farther for an answer to this evasive objection than to the text itself in which the name of chalice is indifferently made use of as well as that of bread; *as often as you eat this bread and drink this chalice,* &c. 1 Cor. xi. 26. the chalice, according to the concession of our adversaries, by metonymy, signifies here the contents thereof *continens pro contento*; and therefore, by parity of reason, by the name of bread is understood CHRIST's Body and Blood couched under those sacramental veils. For, supposing this miraculous change, which we have evinced from other proofs, the metonymy is as easy and natural in one case as in the other. But, as a final solution to this trifling objection, the Apostle himself has obviated it, and explained his own meaning in the foregoing chapter of the same Epistle to the Corinthians, where he says, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of CHRIST? and the bread which we break, is it not the participation of the Body of our Lord?* 1 Cor. x. 16. for how can it be the Communion or the participation of the Body and Blood of CHRIST,

unless the Body and Blood are really couched under the sacramental species?

THIS illustration of the Apostle's meaning in the alledged passages, explains also fully those words of our blessed Lord himself, spoken at the last Supper, and often objected to the same purpose, *I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day, when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God.* Mark xiv. 25. For if this speech referred to the consecrated wine, its meaning is easy and intelligible in the figurative sense, calling it by metonymy, what it was before the mysterious change, as just explained in the other instances. And if it appertains to the unconsecrated wine of the pasch, as St. LUKE's placing this speech before the solemn act of consecration, seems to import, it was literally true, for this was the last time of Christ's eating the pasch with his Apostles in his mortal flesh.

I should not have dwelt so long upon this frivolous objection, which can carry no appearance of a difficulty with an unprejudiced judgment, if our adversaries did not seem to lay a stress upon it. Indeed it is surprising how persons of wit, learning, and sagacity, can seriously give it any weight. But what slips and extravagancies are not the greatest men liable to, when passion and prejudice are their bias?

THEY have equally overshot their wit, or rather have betrayed the weakness of their cause, which they are necessitated to prop up with every feeble support they can lay hold of, when, from CHRIST's delivering himself on several occasions, in parable and metaphor, as where, addressing himself to his Apostles, he said, *I am a vine, you are the vine branches,* &c. they are pleased to conclude that he has made use of the same mode of speech at his last Supper, when, taking bread into his hands, he said, *This is my Body,* &c. If this objection, as trivial as the former, deserved any answer, it might be judged a sufficient and satisfactory one that, in the general sense of mankind, the former speeches were never understood any otherwise than as metaphorical;

metaphorical ; for no one ever took it into his head to think that Christ was really a *vine*, and his Apostles *vine branches* ; whereas the words in dispute, which CHRIST uttered at his last Supper, must be confessed to have been taken by the most considerable body of Christians, Catholics in general, and even by several sectarists, in the literal sense : And from St. PAUL's report of this solemn act of our blessed Lord, who is the only one of the Apostles, except the Evangelists, that has spoken professedly of it, it manifestly appears that they understood it in this manner. But our adversaries themselves will not contend for a strict sameness of meaning between the several texts ; for, in the words of the institution the verb *is* being by them divested of its proper signification, which implies *identity*, is made to import, *This signifies my body* : not so in the other texts ; for they will not say, *I am a vine*, means *I signify a vine*, &c. The disparity between these several speeches is, in other respects, too visible to leave room for an argument from one to the other : For, in the *one* CHRIST names an abstracted, undetermined being, which has no existence but in our mind, and were therefore, undoubtedly, spoken in metaphor, and meant no more than that CHRIST and his Apostles had the properties alluded to : And the literal sense, importing that he was *really* transformed into a *vine*, and they into *vine branches*, is so absurd, that it would be an indignity offered to his increated wisdom, to impute it to him ; and we must suppose the Apostles to have been mere ideots, or their imagination over-clouded with the vapours, to have thus apprehended him. But, in the institution of the Eucharist, he expressly asserts the change of one *determined* being into another *determined* being ; *This*, says he, *is my Body*. Had he, in the former circumstances, said, *I am this vine*, there had been a nearer similitude of locution and ideas, and more to be said for it. But lastly and principally, CHRIST in the speeches mentioned, was haranguing his audience upon general topics, in which it was customary

mary with him, according to the Eastern mode of speaking, to deliver himself in parable and metaphor : and on another occasion, John x. where our blessed Lord said, *I am a door*, the Evangelist expressly remarks that he spoke in *proverb*, or parable ; whereas at his last Supper, he was making his last *will* and *testament*, which from the nature of that solemn act, and from the constant practice of mankind at all times, should, as I observed before, be delivered in the plainest and most intelligible terms. From the whole, I presume to think this objection falls as short of weight as any of the former. Yet our adversaries fond propensity to start difficulties from the most trivial incidents, has given occasion to another of the same complexion. It is grounded on the words of St. PAUL out of the first chapter to the Corinthians, ver. 24. and on the clause of the words of the institution, importing the holy Eucharist to be a *memorial* or commemoration, *Do this for a commemoration of me*, Luke xxii. 19. For what would they infer from this injunction ? It is certainly a commemoration of CHRIST's death and passion, and the Catholic Church is so far from denying it, that by justly distinguishing between a Sacrifice and a Sacrament, she, in the holy sacrifice of the mass, solemnizes a more special memorial of the awful mysteries, and pays a more direct obedience in this respect to CHRIST's ordinance than any of the sectaries of the Reformation. We know also, that as a Sacrament it is a figure or sign, *viz.* An outward sign of inward grace ; that is, of the spiritual nourishment of our soul. We are sensible, that the outward symbols are moreover a sign of the latent or hidden substance couched under them, *viz.* CHRIST's real body and blood. But what we deny, is, that it is a bare memorial, or only a figurative type of CHRIST's body ; and aver, on the contrary, that the Real Presence of it in the Eucharist fulfills a commemoration in the truest meaning of the thing. For example, a man in one circumstance of life may represent

sent himself in another: thus a Prince himself commemorates, or, properly speaking, solemnizes his own birth-day. A General can exhibit, in his own person, the memory of a signal victory gained by himself, as was customary in the Roman triumphs; and St. AUSTIN conceives our blessed Saviour, hanging on the Cross between the good and impenitent thief, as an emblem or type of himself, appearing at the day of general judgment, with the just on the right hand, and the reprobate on the left. Now, from all these instances it is evident, that commemoration is so far from excluding a reality, that, on the contrary, it is perfected by it; and consequently our blessed Lord, in the unbloody sacrifice of his Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is a more perfect type of himself in the bloody sacrifice on Mount Calvary, than if he had instituted, in a figurative representation of his body, a mere commemoration of that dismal tragedy.

FALLING upon this hint of a type, naturally leads me to another proof of the Catholic doctrine. St. PAUL says, that every thing transacted in the old law was only in type and figure, being fulfilled by CHRIST, and evacuated in the law of grace, 1 Cor. x. 6, 11. and therefore, the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, being one of the most solemn actions of CHRIST's life, to wit, a declaration of his last will and testament, and a sacred legacy or pledge of his love to his Apostles and to his Church for ever, he certainly on this occasion, if ever, fulfilled the types and figures signifying this signal token of his love and mercy: And yet, how can this act be reputed a fulfilling these types, if in fact it was no more than an exchange of them into another type, or a revival of the old ones? MELCHISEDEC sacrificed in bread and wine many ages before, and in this prefigured the Priesthood of CHRIST, who was therefore called a Priest for ever, according to the order of MELCHISEDEC; but if the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

Eucharist consists of the naked elements, it can be reputed no more than a continuation of the former type, not a fulfilling thereof; tho' even in these circumstances it might have had the advantage of a peculiar and special grace annexed to it. For, the question is not what grace our blessed Lord might, in his bounty, have allotted to the Sacrament as a mere type and figure of his sacred Body, but whether he did institute it in this manner?

My former arguments, from plain evidences of Scripture, particularly from the words of the institution itself, have tended to prove the negative of this question; and the ancient types and figures of it, I conceive to be an additional confirmation, inasmuch as every pure resemblance or representative is essentially different from its original, or the thing represented. And, in short, it cannot be otherwise understood, as I just hinted, how the types and figures of the old law are evacuated in the new, and fulfilled in CHRIST.

BUT howsoever just these inferences may appear to us, and are so in themselves, our adversaries may look on them with a different eye, and still deem them to be arbitrary. We are a party, and as such may not by them be allowed to be a judge in our own cause. But I must observe, that the same plea holds stronger and with more equity on our side against the Reformers, and therefore concludes, what we have proved in a former controversy, the apparent necessity of a supreme judge in dogmatical matters: such a one we have, of CHRIST's own appointment, *viz.* the Church, inspired, directed, and guided into all truth by the hidden but infallible illumination of the HOLY GHOST.

BUT, for argument's sake, waving at present this prerogative of the Church, we will put the point in debate to a reference; and where, more justly, than to antiquity, the pure age of the Church? That is, to the primitive Fathers, who must be supposed to be best acquainted with the Church's tenets and faith, as
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having derived them immediately from the source itself, CHRIST and his Apostles; and must certainly be admitted to be the most unexceptionable interpreters of their doctrine.

FOR brevity's sake, Scripture alone being the direct appeal agreed to in this controversy, and the Fathers only called in as creditable evidences or vouchers to the truth of the Catholic interpretation, I'll content myself with producing a few of these unexceptionable witnesses, since what appears to be their opinion must be reputed to be the doctrine of the whole Church in her purest age, and what ought to be submitted to in all after times.

SECTION II.

The Article of the Real Presence, and Transubstantiation confirmed from the general sense of antiquity, or the unanimous testimonies of the primitive Fathers.

IN having recourse to the primitive Fathers, St. IGNATIUS the Martyr claims a place at the head of the list, who was a cotemporary with the Apostles themselves, their *eleve* and disciple, and consequently cannot be supposed to be ignorant of the Apostolic doctrine. Now this holy Martyr, in his genuine epistle to the Church of Smyrna, has these remarkable words (quoted also by THEODORET) concerning some obscure Heretics of his own time: "They don't, says he, admit Eucharists, because they don't confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father raised again by his bounty." Theod. Dial. 3.

ST. JUSTIN MARTYR, who lived in the same age, and was one of the first writers of the Church, in his apology for the Christians to the Gentile Emperors, addresses them, on the subject of the Eucharist, as follows: "As our Saviour JESUS CHRIST was himself,

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“ by the word made flesh, and took for our sake
 “ both Flesh and Blood, so we are taught that in the
 “ same manner this food, over which thanks have been
 “ given by the prayers of his own words, by which
 “ our flesh and blood are nourished, is the Flesh and
 “ Blood of the same incarnate JESUS.” St. Justin.
 Mart. in Apolog.

ST. IRENÆUS, Bishop of Lyons, who lived in the second Century, affirms, that our bodies will rise again, because they are nourished with the Body and Blood of our Lord. L. 4. con. Hær. c. 34.

ST. CYPRIAN Sermon in Cæn. Dom. says, “ The bread which our Lord gave to his disciples, being changed not in shape, but in nature, by the omnipotency of the word is made Flesh.” St. Cypr. in Sermon in Cæn. Dom. And in many other parts of his works he talks the same language.

ST. CYRIL of Hierusalem speaks so plainly the language of the Catholic Church, that is, the doctrine of Transubstantiation, that I cannot forbear giving the reader his sentiments at length. His words are these: “ Since then he himself (CHRIST) affirms and says of the bread, *This is my Body*, who shall henceforward dare to doubt of it? And since he assures us, and says, *This is my Blood*, who can distrust the truth of it, or say it is not his Blood? He changed water into wine in Cana of Galilee; and does he deserve to be less credited concerning the change of wine into his Blood? Wherefore let us receive (these things) with a full conviction, as the Body and Blood of CHRIST: for, in the figure of Bread is given to you the Body, and in the figure of wine is given to you the Blood. Do not then look on these things as common bread and wine, for as our Lord has affirmed it, they are the Body and Blood of CHRIST. And altho’ your sense might suggest to you otherwise, let faith confirm you; judge not of the things by your taste, but by faith assure yourself, without the least doubt, that you are ho-
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“nourished with the Body and Blood of CHRIST; being taught these things, and most fully assured, that what appears bread is not bread, tho’ it seems so to your taste, but is the Body of CHRIST, and that what appears wine is not wine, tho’ the taste will have it so, but *is the Blood of CHRIST.*” St. Cyr. Hejurusal. catech. mystag. 4.

IN consequence to this ancient Father’s delivering himself on the point in question, in the manner we have just heard, begging one small and reasonable concession, that he is supposed to have spoken common sense; I infer, that whereas he makes a direct comparison between the miraculous change at Cana in Galilee, and the change made by CHRIST in the institution of the adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist; such as one is, such must also the other be. But the first miraculous change was certainly a real and substantial change; as such, is related in the Gospel; as such, was ever understood; and if it had not been a substantial change, would have been no miracle at all: therefore, to make the comparison adequate, and to suppose the good Father, I say, to talk common sense, the second change must also be real and substantial; that is, it must be a change of the substances of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of CHRIST; and how our senses are to give way to faith, of which the Father makes reiterated demands in this passage, but by such a substantial change, is equally unintelligible.

BUT then, from this reasonable concession, that this Father spoke sense, and would be understood to mean what he spoke, I infer again, that he must have been a rank Papist in this controverted article; and I appeal to every candid reader, and impartial judge, whether it be possible for the most sanguine advocate for Transubstantiation to deliver this doctrine in more clear and explicit terms than he has done.

AND again, as the passage I have produced is extracted from a catechistical and dogmatical instruction,

in this he must be supposed to have declared the genuine Faith of the whole Catholic Church at that time; or if he had not, it is surprising there was not a loud outcry of the other orthodox Fathers, his contemporaries, raised against him, and this his opinion anathematized, with several other novelties of those days. But the contrary being most certain, I infer, lastly, and conclude from the whole, that this single testimony, so strong and full, is an ample declaration of the belief of the whole Catholic Church at that early time, and therefore I might spare my reader's patience, of running over any more quotations from those ancient and venerable authorities. However, I cannot forbear, out of numbers, to add to the list of these irrefragable vouchers for Transubstantiation, two eminent Doctors of each of the Eastern and Western Churches, renowned champions for, and avowed Pillars of, the Catholic Faith.

I BEGIN with St. CHRYSOSTOM, the great light of the Oriental Church, who, concerning this substantial change of the elements of bread and wine into CHRIST'S Body and Blood in the holy Eucharist, writes thus: "Let us always believe God, and not contradict him, tho' what he says seems to be repugnant both to our thoughts and our senses: for, his words cannot deceive us, but our senses may be easily deceived: he never errs, and these are often mistaken. Since therefore he says, *This is my Body*, let us be fully persuaded of it. How many say now, Oh! that I could see him in his own shape, or his cloaths, or any thing about him; believe me, you see him, you touch him, you eat him. You would see his cloaths, and he lets you not only see him, but also touch him, and eat him, and receive him within you." Chrys. Hom. 83. in St. Matt. Now if words are to be understood in their natural meaning, I dare be confident, that none can more clearly express the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation than the above quotation of this learned Father and Doctor of the

the Church. It must obviously occur, upon reading this passage, and is greatly deserving our notice, that the Father here, directly subverts the foundation of our adversaries opposition to the Real Presence, *the information of their senses*: to wit, they pretend they can't submit to a belief that contradicts their senses; and St. CHRYSOSTOM here positively avers that our senses must give way to faith; that those are often mistaken, and that therefore in the very point under consideration, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, the plain words of CHRIST, *This is my Body*, ought to over-rule the suggestions or informations of our senses, and influence us into a stedfast persuasion of its being, what he has made and declared it to be, his Real Body. Thus far, I say, it has fallen in pertinently to this capital argument of our adversaries (which I shall speak to more fully in the next section) to shew that this learned Father has here obviated and refuted it to my hands. His sentiments in support of this article of the Catholic Faith, are uniform and equally strong and explicit in numerous other parts of his works; as where he says, "that what is in the chalice is the same that flowed from CHRIST's side: this same Body, lying in the manger, the Sages adored; but you don't see it in the manger, but on the altar." Chrys. Hom. 24. in 1 ad cor. And in another place, as it were in rapture and extasy, at the consideration of the ineffable mercy conferred upon us in the institution of this adorable Sacrament, he cries out, "Oh miracle! Oh the goodness of God! He that sitteth above with his Father, in that very instant (of Consecration) he is held in the hands of every one," Lib. 3. de sacerdot. c. 4. that is, in the hands of the Priests.

St. GREGORY NYSSEN, another light of the Oriental Church, living in the fourth century, and something the senior of St. CHRYSOSTOM, having premised that "we receive the immortal Body of CHRIST into our bowels; that though received by thousands of people, it is intire in each and every part (of the consecrated elements)

elements) he concludes, that as bread was changed into CHRIST's Body, during his mortal sojourning on earth, by nourishment, "so now it is changed into the Body of CHRIST, not by nourishing it, but (being sanctified by the word of God and by prayer) is suddenly changed into it by these words, *This is my Body*, the nature of these things that appear, being transelemented into it by the power of consecration." Greg. Nys. Orat. Catech. c. 37. T. 3. Edit. Paris. An. 1638.

ST. AMBROSE, one of the Pillars and Doctors of the Latin Church, in his book de Initiatis, conformably to the sentiments and doctrine of these Greek Fathers, avers, that bread and wine are supernaturally changed into the Body of CHRIST, the same which was born of the Virgin, and into his Blood, which he proves to be possible, from the several miraculous changes recorded in the Old Testament, as of MOSES's rod converted into a serpent; the rivers of Egypt changed into blood, and by the prayers of MOSES, resuming their own nature; the seas opening a passage; the stream of the river Jordan returning back; and lastly, of iron by the command of ELIZHA, contrary to its natural inclination, swimming on the surface of the water: from all which wonders and astonishing changes and operations, he concludes thus: "We see, therefore, says he, that grace is stronger than nature. Now, if a man's blessing could change the course of nature, what do we think of the divine consecration itself, in which the very words of our Saviour operate? for, the Sacrament which you receive is made by the words of CHRIST. And, if ELIJAH's words were able to draw fire from Heaven, will not CHRIST's words be able to change the species of the elements? we read of all creatures in the world, *He said, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created*: is not then the word of CHRIST, which could give a being to that which had none, able to change those things which are, into what they were not before? for it is not less to

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“ give new natures to things than to change their natures.” This holy Doctor lastly concludes his argument with a corroborative proof from the mystery of the incarnation. “ Was our Lord, says he, naturally born? it is clear he was born of a Virgin, above the laws of nature; and this Body, which we consecrate was born of the Virgin. Why then do we seek for the order of nature in the Body of CHRIST, who was born of a Virgin, contrary to it?” St. Ambr. Lib. de Initiatis.

To omit many other passages from this holy Doctor's learned writings, to the same effect as what we have now quoted, and to pass by the uncontestable proof of the Real Presence, and of Transubstantiation, from the author de Sacramentis, supposed to be St. AMBROSE, or a cotemporary; I beg leave only to draw two consequences from what we have already cited, allowed to be undoubtedly his: first, that either, when he talked the language we have just heard, he believed the articles of Transubstantiation and a Real Presence of CHRIST's Body in the Eucharist, or we must suppose him to be a mere trifler in his way of arguing, and to have drawn inferences not only unworthy of himself, but nonsensical and ridiculous; for in the supposition of his holding a mere figurative presence, and no real change of the elements, his argument, and the arguments of the rest of the learned Fathers, who like him reason from the aforecited examples, must stand thus: MOSES changed his rod really and substantially into a serpent: he changed waters into real blood, &c. &c. the other servants of God operated the like real and miraculous changes. GOD, by his omnipotent word, produced real and substantial beings out of nothing, therefore CHRIST, by the same omnipotent word, changed bread into his Body; not really and substantially, but merely figuratively, instituting it as a bare type and sign of his sacred Body. Now if this is not trifling nonsense, unworthy of the great men whom it is imposed upon, nonsense, from henceforward may be

be reputed sense; black be called white, and every thing be named by its contrary. Yet it is certain that our adversaries must put all this trifling stuff, and flat, barefaced contradictions into the mouths of these eminent Doctors of the Church, if they pretend to challenge them as advocates for their symbolical system.

ALSO in the same supposition, St. AMBROSE's last argument, drawn from the incarnation, to prove the superior power of grace over nature, evidently falls to the ground, and is destitute both of sense and meaning, and the allusion quite impertinent. For, what extraordinary power of grace can we see or imagine in the bare institution of a sign? that is in bread, remaining bread, to be the sign or figure of CHRIST's Body? and what resemblance would it have in this sense, with the prevailing power of grace over nature, exemplified in the mystery of the Incarnation? Certainly none at all.

IF therefore, in order to clear these eminent men from the imputation of talking such nonsense, and to make them consistent with themselves, we must, on the contrary, admit them to be avowed patrons and abettors of the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation; it follows from thence, as a direct and immediate consequence, that the same was the unanimous opinion and belief of St. AUSTIN, St. HIEROM, and other lights of the Church, who were their cotemporaries, and in communion with them; and was, therefore, the universal faith of the Catholic Church till the end of the fourth century.

IT follows also, from the said premises, that any obscure passages culled out of the works of these venerable monuments of antiquity, or any scraps of sentences disjointed from the context to favour the opposite opinion, must be deemed insufficient to over-rule, or even to ballance their other clear and positive assertions of the Catholic Faith: for, in this case, the Fathers are to be reconciled to themselves by the same rule

rule, by which we reconcile the seeming contradictions in the sacred writings, *viz.* Scripture explained by Scripture: the Fathers by the Fathers; that is, the obscure texts of one and the other, by other texts, clear, explicit, and more numerous.

A FURTHER attention to the following observations and distinctions, which have also been partly premised before, will clear, beyond all ambiguity, many obscure passages that occur in the writings of these primitive lights of the Church. First, There are two things to be distinguished in the Eucharist, *viz.* the hidden virtue or substance of it, which is CHRIST's real Body, and the outward accidents or appearances. Relatively to these several acceptations the Sacrament is diversely called, both in Scripture, by the Fathers, and at this time of day by Catholic Divines; and even CHRIST himself speaks to both these relations, where he says, John vi. 51. *The bread that I shall give is my Flesh for the life of the world*; and where in different places the Divine Banquet is signified by the denomination of *breaking of bread*.

2dly, THO' the Eucharist be the real Body and Blood of CHRIST, it is also, as we have often said, a sign, type, and memorial, *viz.* An outward sign of inward grace, accruing to the worthy receiver; a sign of the latent substance, CHRIST's Body and Blood couched under the sacramental symbols; and, in fine, a type or memorial of CHRIST's Death and Passion. Now the language of the inspired writers, of the Fathers, and even of Catholics at this present time, speaking of the holy Eucharist, is, as I said, accommodated to these various acceptations; so that we may hear both the one and the other call it by the names of the elements, and term it a type, figure, and memorial without any prejudice to, or exclusion of, the reality of CHRIST's Body in the Sacrament. As a due attention then to these remarks are fit to elucidate many obscure and ambiguous passages in the writings of the ancient Fathers; so it is for want of making
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these proper distinctions, that our adversaries often mistake the sense of the holy Fathers, or foully misrepresent them.

THO' the sentiments of St. AMBROSE, in this controversy, so plainly attested above from his own mouth, are a sufficient indication, as I just hinted, of the opinion of his disciple St. AUSTIN, whom he had the happiness to reclaim from error, and therefore must be supposed to have reconciled to the faith he professed himself, in this, and every article of the Catholic Church; yet the credit and single authority of this great man is so justly espoused by the Church, and what our adversaries dare not but revere, that I cannot omit giving at least an abstract of his professed belief in this principal point of the Catholic doctrine, as they occasionally occur in his writings. They are comprehended under the following heads: First, That CHRIST's Body is really present upon the altar, under the Sacramental Signs: Secondly, That we receive it not only with our heart, but also with our mouth: Thirdly, That it is actually received even by the unworthy communicant: Fourthly, That tho' the species or accidents of bread and wine may, in one respect, be called the Signs of Christ's Body and Blood, they are the signs not of a thing absent, but of a thing latent; or, as couched under those Sacramental veils, "in the same manner (to use one or two of his own familiar comparisons, adopted since by St. ANSELM) as blood is the sign of a soul, and breath an indication of life." St. Aug. lib. conf. ch. 13. Id. c. 2. cont. adv. legis & Prophetarum. ch. 9. Id. Ser. 11. de verb Dom. c. 11. & alibi.

THE same Doctor commenting on the 33d Psalm, and speaking first to the title thereof, as it is in the Septuagint, *He was carried in his own hands*, he argues directly to the point in hand, and conclusively: "Who," says he, can conceive this possible for a man? Was ever man carried in his own hands? He may indeed be carried in the hands of other people, but no
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“ man was ever carried in his own. I understand not,
 “ then, how this can be meant literally of David, but
 “ we find it verified in CHRIST, for he was carried
 “ in his own hands, when giving his very Body, he
 “ said, *This is my Body*: for that Body he carried in
 “ his own hands.” St. Aug. conc. 1. in Psal. xxxiii.
 And in another comment on Psal. xcvi. he writes
 thus: “ He (CHRIST) took Flesh of the Flesh of
 “ MARY, and because in this Flesh he conversed. he
 “ gave us also the same Flesh to eat, for our salva-
 “ tion. Now there is no body that eateth of this
 “ Flesh, but first adores it. And we not only don’t
 “ sin in adoring it, but we sin if we don’t adore it.”
 St. Aust. in Psal. xcvi. 5.

Now, if saying that under the Sacramental veil is
 contained the identical Flesh of CHRIST, which he
 took of his Virgin Mother, and declaring it the object
 of our adoration, be not asserting the Catholic doctrine
 of the Real Presence, I cannot conceive any words
 plain and significant enough to express it; and those
 we have just quoted must be supposed to be divested
 of their proper and natural meaning. This extract,
 then, with the other hints I have given from this great
 Doctor’s works, I apprehend to clench effectually the
 testimonies we have produced from the rest of the
 holy Fathers, his contemporaries: is moreover an ample
 declaration of the conformity of his own belief,
 and a corroborative evidence to the Catholic Faith in
 this material article of it; therefore, with the senti-
 ments of this great man, not to trespass on the pa-
 tience of my reader, I may close my extracts from
 these primitive lights of the Church: For, as those I
 have already produced, shew to a degree of demon-
 stration, that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was
 the universal faith of the Church in its primitive age,
 at a time it is allowed to have been wholly free from
 corruptions, therefore what was orthodox then, must
 have been so in succeeding ages, and may excuse me

the trouble, and my reader, I say, the patience, of tracing any lower this doctrinal point.

FOR brevity's sake, I beg leave, however, to comprise it under one single observation, and within the same to compendiate the sentiments of the whole body of the Catholic teachers, thro' every age of the Church: but as it has often been taken notice of, and thoroughly managed by several other better hands, a transient view of it will answer my present purpose. The observation I would recommend is, briefly, as follows.

THE article of the Real Presence is so seemingly repugnant to human sense, that if it had been a novelty, or an error intruded into the Church, and imposed on the faith of mankind, as our modern Reformers would fain persuade us, it could not have failed of undergoing the fate which has visibly attended all other considerable changes and innovations in religious matters, *viz.* of meeting with the warmest opposition: or, at least, we cannot suppose it could have crept in by stealth, and so insensibly into the world, but that the epoch of this extraordinary event, and the means by which it was brought about, would have been recorded in history, with every circumstance belonging to it.

THUS, a particular account of all heresies, which ever appeared in the Church, have been transmitted to posterity; the authors of them are known; the very date of their rise and fall; the progress they made, and the vigorous opposition they met with, stand upon record. We need not go any further for a proof than the late pretended Reformation itself, relating whereto there is no incident, whether considered in regard to the whole body, or the particular branches of it, but has been minuted down, and entered into the history of these religious revolutions.

IN the article of Transubstantiation (barring the adoption of the term, which was introduced for a clearer explanation of the mystery) nothing of this appears;

appears : on the contrary, the primitive Fathers, as we have seen, are avowed abettors of it, and thereby are irrefragable witnesses to its being the Faith of the Universal Church in their own time, and vouchers to the orthodoxy of it in the subsequent ages ; because, as I just observed, what is once orthodox must be always so : and, unless our adversaries are fond of calling to their aid the obscure impugnors of the Real Presence, whom St. IGNATIUS the Martyr hints at in his epistle above cited, and brands with the ignominy of Innovators on the same account ; their system was never heard of till Berengarius, in the eleventh century, broached his temerarious opinions on this head, which no sooner made their appearance, than they were stigmatised and condemned as a novel doctrine, till then unknown, and a scandal to the Christian world.

It was upon this event, or soon after, that the term Transubstantiation was occasionally adopted in the Church, in opposition to this pernicious error ; not by coining a new article of Faith, as our adversaries disingenuously misrepresent it, but by explaining the old one, *viz.* as old as Christianity itself, as I have already, and shall further shew.

SUCH is the antiquity of Transubstantiation, and such the modern production and rise of the contrary system ; an unnatural child, no sooner begot but disowned and abjured by the parent of it (Berengarius) who was ashamed of his monstrous offspring. Thus abandoned, it was buried in oblivion till the two last centuries, when the spirit of Reforming coming into fashion, ZUINGLIUS, CALVIN, and the rest of the train of Sacramentarians, revived the Berengarian error ; in this point reformed on their patriarch LUTHER, and how roughly they were handled by him for it we have already heard ; and, to the indelible scandal of the Reformation, their differences and variations do, and must ever subsist, as long as they continue separated from the Catholic Church, in which unity of Faith is only to be found,

IN the mean while, to the point I undertook to prove, I beg leave to say, that the fixed epoch of the figurative system being of a modern date, and so notoriously known, and the epoch of Transubstantiation, on the contrary, immemorial, is an irrefragable demonstration of the novelty of the one, and the antiquity and orthodoxy of the other. In effect, the rise and different states and vicissitudes of the first, are what no one, the least conversant in the history of the late changes in Religion, can be ignorant of. But, of the Catholic tenet, (if litigating about terms be laid aside, and the things themselves become the subject of our debate) we defy our adversaries to trace its origin, or to fix its birth; and therefore, by St. AUSTIN's rule, it can have no other than that of the Church itself, derived from the Apostles, the founders of it, under CHRIST, from whom we have received the whole system of her belief; "When any Doctrine, says this
 " learned Father, is found generally received in the
 " visible Church, in any age whatsoever, whereof
 " there is no certain author or beginning to be found,
 " then it is sure that such a Doctrine came down from
 " CHRIST and his Apostles." St. Aug, c. 4. de Bpt. c. 6. 24. Item. L. de unit. Eccle. c. 19.

FROM all we have hitherto urged in this and the former section, I draw the following inferences, which I presume to think no less pertinent to our subject than conclusive: first, if possession immemorial can give a prescriptive right, the article of Transubstantiation lays a just claim to it, which derives its birth from the birth of Christianity: secondly, if the testimony and authority of the primitive Fathers deserve any weight, we flatter ourselves that it falls into our scales, since we have made it appear, that they are unanimously and entirely on our side of the debate: thirdly, if we are to appeal to, and abide by the words of the institution of this august Sacrament, and by the correlative extracts out of the other part of the inspired writings, taken in their literal and obvious sense, exclusive of
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forced and strained constructions of the texts; we are confident that they are clear for the Catholic belief. All these I look upon as plain evidences to the Catholic cause, and therefore none but the like plain evidences, for the opposite side, can be judged of equal weight to ballance them, and nothing less, than demonstration itself, will be sufficient to over-rule our foregoing conclusive proofs. Yet we apprehend that our adversaries arguments fall so far short of these just demands, that, on the contrary, the Catholics have many collateral poofs, connected with the foregoing premises, to strengthen and confirm their belief; and that our adversaries have nothing material to oppose against them; which is what I undertake to make good in the next Section.

SECTION III.

The Doctrine of Transubstantiation further evinced from the weakness and insufficiency of the arguments in the opposition.

THE Evangelist St. JOHN, preparing us for his relation of our blessed Lord's last farewell, which he took of his disciples on the eve of his Passion, says of him, *That having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end*: St. John xiii. 1. that is, being a true and constant lover, he sustained this character to the last, by giving the strongest proofs of his inflamed affections at the last interview, when he was just going to be separated from them. For, as our blessed Saviour (being God as well as man) could not be subject to the vicissitudes of human passions, his love was, no doubt, intrinsically the same at all times: but, according to the diversity of circumstances he happened to be in, it pleased his increated wisdom to vary his external proofs of it, as he judged most conducive to our advantage; and therefore, upon this last farewell and impending separation, besides that ineffable unparalleled proof of his love which he gave

gave the next day in laying down his life for theirs and our sakes ; it appears, in the Catholic sense of the institution of the blessed Sacrament of the holy Eucharist, how he also by this act gave them an anticipated testimony of his inflamed affections, by bequeathing to them his precious Body and Blood, as a perpetual earnest and memorial of his love. Says St. JOHN, *So God loved the world as to give for it his only Son*, John iii. 16. viz. in the mystery of the Incarnation : and the Son, the Eternal Word, consubstantial to his Father, and therefore uniform in his actions, and unanimous in his affections, repeated, or rather perpetuated, this act of love, in giving himself over again to the world in the mystery of the holy Eucharist. In this august Sacrament is verified, in reality and truth, what the royal Prophet ascribed, or rather, applied to the Manna in type and figure, *A memorial of all his wonders, in giving food, viz. his own Body and Blood, to those that fear him, and love him*. Psalm cxi. 4. The adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist may therefore, in the Catholic sense, be properly called the Sacrament of love, the compendium of all the other mysteries, a recapitulation of his manifold wonders and miracles, a repetition of his unspeakable mercies ; and, at once, an exercise of all his divine attributes. The creation was, indeed, a manifestation of his omnipotency ; the incarnation was an instance and ineffable token of his mercy ; but, in the institution of the Sacrament of the holy Eucharist he unites, as it were, these two mysteries in one : for by changing one substance into another, bread and wine into his sacred Body and Blood, he no less displays his omnipotence, as St. AMBROSE, cited in the last section, justly observes, than by making every thing out of nothing, in the work of the creation : and he, on this same occasion, renews the covenant of his mercy, which he had struck up with us at his incarnation, but, I may say, in some respect in a more astonishing and endearing manner ; for then

he was only specifically united to us, in assuming our nature; here individually, by incorporation.

SUCH, then, being the wonderful efforts of CHRIST's love, mercy and goodness to man, in the institution of this Sacrament of love, and mystery of propitiation, to reject so great a blessing: by a wilful opiniative disbelief of its existence, argues no less ingratitude than infidelity. A greater indignity cannot be offered to the memory of a friend deceased than to disdain to accept of, or to undervalue his dying legacy, the last token of his friendly affection. And can the conduct of our adversaries be deemed any thing else, in rejecting CHRIST's gracious legacy in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, by mistaking it for what he never intended it; when they substitute the figure of his sacred Body and Blood for the reality; and this in direct contradiction to his express and positive declarations?

BUT, let us see what is the plea our adversaries make use of to screen themselves from these just imputations. The most fundamental, and what the learnedest of them lay the greatest stress upon, is, the testimony of their senses, seconded by human reason, or, the seeming contradiction in the Real Presence, both to one and the other. They think it a wonderful mystery, out of the reach of their senses, and above their comprehension; and therefore adjudge it incredible. This is their capital objection. In a word, the case fairly stated, is this; CHRIST, as positively and plainly as words can express, has asserted a change of bread and wine into his sacred Body and Blood, saying, *This is my Body*, &c. our adversaries, weighing this declaration in the ballance of human reason, and putting it to the test of their corporal senses, judge the literal meaning of it what actually is not, or what even could not be: for the bulk of their arguments against this mysterious change directly lead to this conclusion, which, if they would but speak out, is, to say honestly and truly, that they pay a greater deference to these human testimonies than to the divine authority,

and that therefore, CHRIST's power, veracity or sincerity, being placed in competition with these evidences, are to be distrusted.

How blasphemous and injurious to Almighty God this judgment is, the matter itself speaks! for, as we are rational and free creatures, there are two tributes due from us to the great Author of our being; the first is, the tribute of our will by love, thanksgiving and adoration: the second is, the subjection of our understanding, with all its faculties, by faith: in consequence whereof, the most daring and direct insult a man can offer to God is atheism and idolatry. By atheism, we absolutely deny or distrust his divine existence: by idolatry, we give his essence and glory to another. The injury nearest approaching to these, is to discredit what he has revealed. Yet this latter guilt the Reformers cannot be excused from, when they presume to contest the Real Presence of CHRIST's Body and Blood in the Sacrament, in direct contradiction to his positive affirmation of it: in which respect, as their conduct is shocking to pious sense, and injurious to Almighty God, so it is no less unreasonable in itself, and inconsistent with their avowed belief of several other articles of faith, no less difficult and incomprehensible, where they make no scruple of subjecting their reason to its dictates, as is evident from the instances I will now produce: and in several other circumstances are equally obliged to acknowledge the deception or mistake of their senses, as I hope to make appear from the sundry instances, I shall appeal to by and by.

FIRST then, with regard to the captivating our understanding in obedience to the dictates of faith: this in the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation is indispensable. For that there should be Three Persons in the Godhead, and that these Three should be distinct, and yet be one and the same, are mysteries that give such a shock to reason, as nothing but an humble and submissive faith can over-rule. We may believe them,
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we cannot conceive them. Again, that an increated, self-existent, illimited, unchangable being should be united to a created, limited and changable one: in a word, that God should become man, that he should be liable to all his infirmities (sin excepted) in fine, that a God should suffer, and a God die, was a scandal of old to the Jews, and a stumbling-block to the Gentiles. It is a mystery which the more we think of, the more thought and reason is lost, and we have nothing left but to pay an implicit belief to what we cannot comprehend: and herein also the main body of the Reformed Churches intirely acquiesce. They also read of the wonderful works of the Creation, of all things being made out of nothing, and of themselves, and every creature, receiving a being which had none before; and they believe it: they hear in the sacred writings of the miraculous changes operated through the ministry of the servants of God, as well as by CHRIST himself; *viz.* of rivers converted into blood, of MOSES's rod changed into a serpent, of water converted into wine in Cana of Galilee, and many others of the like nature; and their faith is not the least staggered at the relation of these extraordinary events: they hear them, and they being attested by Divine Revelation, the written word of God, they readily give their assent to them; but, when they hear attested from the same divine authority, that CHRIST taking bread into his hands changed it into his sacred Body, saying, *This is my Body*, they affect to be shocked at the literal and only proper meaning of the words: they cannot conceive them to import a real change of the substance: it is a hidden mystery to them, and out of the reach of their senses; and therefore they refuse to believe it.

Now the vanity and incoherency of these evasive excuses we have heard already obviated and fully refuted by St. AMBROSE, Section II. which I need not repeat: but, in consequence to what this great Doctor of the Church has urged there, with so

much truth and strength of reason, I'll only beg leave to put one or two obvious questions. Is Almighty God's power contracted, or less operative now than it was heretofore? 'Tis what no one can presume to say: therefore, if he could, in the beginning, create every thing out of nothing, and in process of time could convert water into wine, and by himself and his ministers did the other miraculous changes just mentioned, he certainly is not less able now to transmute bread and wine into his sacred Body and Blood; nor is his veracity less to be depended upon now, that he positively declares he has operated this mysterious change, than he is to be believed, by virtue of the same omnipotent word, to have given a being to what was not, when he only spoke the word, and they *were made*, Gen. i. and to have done the other manifold and surprising wonders afterwards. The truth of these changes is unquestionable; admitted as such by our adversaries: the Divine Power by which they are operated is also undoubtedly extensive, by the will and pleasure of God, to all times and circumstances; and the actual exercise of this power, in the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is equally evident, if credit is to be given to CHRIST's plain words which aver the fact, or to the Evangelists who relate it.

HOWEVER, our adversaries pretend to discover a material difference betwixt the miraculous changes we have just instanced, and the change in dispute, *viz.* that the former were perceptible to the senses of those who were the witnesses of them, and therefore certain; the latter imperceptible, and therefore affording grounds for a doubt of it.

THE allegation is true, but the illation intirely sophistical. In answer to it I must observe that the other recited changes were bare miracles; this a mystery: those the object of sense, and therefore to be attested by our senses; this of faith, and therefore to be believed, tho' out of the *ken* of our senses; since our blessed Lord himself has pronounced those *blessed*
who

who believe what they have not seen. For this is the merit and perfection of faith, that the object be hid from our senses, and even out of the reach of our comprehension; and it is not faith in its full perfection but under these circumstances, according to the Apostle's definition of it; *Faith is the evidence of things that appear not.* Heb. xi. 1. Pursuant to this rule of faith, we heard St. CHRYSOSTOM say, in the last Section, "That our reason and senses must bend to faith, tho' what it propounds to us may be seemingly repugnant to both one and the other". St. Chrys. Hom. 83. in St. Matth. And SOLOMON had cautioned us, long before, not to be too prying and inquisitive into the sublime mysteries: *What is above you, says he, do not enquire into; in his (Almighty God's) works do not be curious: for it is not necessary you should see with your eyes what is hid.* Eccles. iii. 22, 23. And this exposition of the nature of faith, and the essential difference subsisting between the sacred mysteries, which are the proper objects of Divine Faith, and miracles, which are the immediate objects of our senses, is a direct answer to, and a refutation of a favourite and capital argument of Dr. TILLOTSON, and other sticklers against Transubstantiation: they are pleased to aver, that the very notion of a Transubstantiation, in contradiction to our senses, destroys the certainty we have of CHRIST's Resurrection; and, in consequence thereto, that it overturns our whole belief, and the grounds of Christianity! which they pretend to prove thus: "The Apostles (say they) had no other assurance of the truth of CHRIST's Resurrection than the information of their senses; but if our senses are under a deception in the holy Eucharist, they might have been equally deceived in the other circumstances; therefore the truth of the Resurrection may still be a matter of doubt, and the whole sum of Christian Religion, depending upon it, disputable."

IN answer to this formidable argument, I say, That the reality of CHRIST's Resurrection, tho' an object of faith to us who were not eye-witnesses of it, was not properly such to them, as ocular evidences; and therefore when some of the disciples, at the first sight of their Lord and Master, miraculously resuscitated, had a distrust of its being a phantom or spirit they saw, our blessed Saviour disabused them by appealing to the aid of their other sense of feeling; telling them, *That spirits had not flesh and bones like him*, Luke xxiv. 39. And afterwards, as a conviction to the incredulous THOMAS, who could not be prevailed on to give credit to the attestation of his fellow Apostles concerning the truth of the mystery, CHRIST, appearing a second time to him, in company with the rest, appealed also to the information of this disbelieving Apostle's sense of feeling: *Then he saith to Thomas, Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing*. John xx. 27. And the reason of our blessed Lord's making use, with them, of these means of conviction was, that respectively to the Apostles who were to ascertain the truth of CHRIST's Resurrection to their profelytes, it was the object of experimental knowledge, and not properly of faith.

BUT the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, being to them as well as to us entirely a mystery, CHRIST neither appealed to their senses nor to ours, as a proof or evidence to the truth of it, but left it wholly as an object of faith. And even in the point of his Resurrection, our blessed Saviour told St. THOMAS, that *Blessed are they who have not seen and believe*, John xx. 29. insinuating, that the faithful, who in after times would credit this mystery independent of the testimony of their senses, should merit thereby more than he who refused his assent to it upon any other terms but their bare evidence. And even this incredulous Apostle himself, being thus compelled into

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a confession of his infidelity in this point, did not affect to say, "That he now believed CHRIST to be *" really risen,"* because the fact was made visible and evident to him; but he declared his belief of what he did not see, *viz.* of CHRIST's Divinity, confessing him *his Lord and his God*, John xx. 28. This manner of reasoning on this partiular conduct of St. THOMAS, St. GREGORY the Great makes use of: "It is plain, says he, *" that Faith is the evidence of things which do not appear,* because what appears is not then believed, but known to be what it is: why therefore, proceeds this Father, "when the Apostle both felt and saw CHRIST, is it said to him, *Because you see me you believe?* Because he saw one thing and believed another; for the Divinity could not be seen with mortal eyes, and yet, seeing him in human flesh, he confessed him to be God, crying out, *My Lord and my God.*" St. Greg. Hom. 26. in John xx. So this great Doctor, entirely agreeable to what I just offered my reader upon this passage, obviating and directly refuting the favourite argument of the Archbishop of Canterbury and his associates, *viz.* That the deception of our senses, in matters of faith, can be any means of undermining the foundation of Christianity, or of overturning the grounds of our whole belief.

HOWEVER, the circumstance of the deception of our senses in the holy Eucharist is not destitute of precedents, even from the sacred writings, and therefore the motive of our adversaries incredulity fetched from the evidence of their senses, is still insufficient and groundless. Holy Writ, I say, furnishes us with numerous examples, which clear up this matter, in the several apparitions of the angelical spirits, delegated by Almighty God to his servants on earth, on sundry errands and messages. For, how did they appear? Not as they were in themselves and in their own nature; since, being pure spirits, they must have been invisible to corporal eyes: they assumed therefore a human

human shape, the proper and natural object of human sense; appeared to be what they were not, but were believed to be what they were. Thus RAPHAEL, the Archangel, associating himself, by God's command, to TOBY the younger, had the appearance of a young man, seemingly eat, drank, conversed, and performed all the other functions of a human corporeal being; as such he was looked upon by TOBY, till, having discovered his angelic nature and his embassy, he was believed and revered for what he was, tho' appearing to be what he was not. The Angels also appearing to the Apostles, and to the good women, visiting CHRIST's Sepulchre, affected in a different manner, their faith and their senses; seeming to be men, believed to be Angels. The HOLY GHOST, appearing over the head of our blessed Lord at his Baptism, and descending afterwards upon his Apostles on the day of Pentecost, had the likeness of a dove, on the first occasion, of fiery tongues on the latter; figures which carry the nearest analogy to that holy Spirit, but, by its surprising effects, was believed to be what he was, the Divine Paraclete, which enlightens and inflames every man fitly disposed to be susceptible of his influence: known, I say, by its inward irresistible force, not by any outward characters.

To these instances of the error of sight, I'll add one in which the other senses had a share of deception; this was in regard to the Manna miraculously showered down on the Israelites in the desert, which being mercifully bestowed upon them by Almighty God for their food and nourishment, and being visibly the same thing to all, yet varied in its taste, according to the respective appetites and inclinations of the eaters, relishing that, which each one had a fancy for, and conceived it, or wished it to be!

In short, all these instances (to omit innumerable others, which are to be gathered from the sacred writings) it is certain, that the external senses laid under a gross error and mistake. The facts are undoubted, and

and our adversaries cannot contest the truth of them : Why then such a wonder raised at the deception of our senses in the point in question ? Why, upon their bare information, is the reality of CHRIST's presence in the Sacrament of the Eucharist rejected ? when it is proved, from so many undoubted precedents, that our senses are liable to be deceived : that in those sundry circumstances they have been deceived, and therefore may be again deceived : and, from the very nature and intent of this august Sacrament it was necessary, in this case, that they should be deceived. For, our blessed Lord's design was, as we have already shewn, to communicate himself to us, to incorporate himself with us, and to become our food, for the spiritual nourishment of our souls ; which could not be done in his own natural shape, nor, indeed, in any other than a borrowed shape. And it was fitting, moreover, for a trial and proof of our faith, that his Corporal Presence should be concealed under these veils ; since, as I hinted above, it is only thus that it becomes the object of faith. To see, feel, hear, and to taste, are the means (tho' fallacious and liable to mistake) of coming to experimental knowledge, and the test by which it is tried, but cannot be admitted to be the proof of Divine Faith ; because, on the contrary, by the Apostle's rule, *Faith is the evidence of what does not appear*, Heb. xi. 1. and CHRIST pronounces them blessed who attain to this perfection of it : *Blessed are those who have not seen and believe*. John xx. 29.

BUT after all this great clamour raised against Transubstantiation, on account of the deception of our senses ; what, if we take upon us to maintain, with the great St. THOMAS of Aquin, that in fact our senses are not deceived : for, properly speaking, it is the accidents, properties, and the covers, if I may so call them, of the substance, and which are separable from it, that are the immediate objects of our senses,

and not the substance itself: and that these are distinct qualities from the substance and separable from it, is evinced from undeniable instances in the Holy Bible. For heat and light are certainly, no less the properties of fire, than colour and taste are of bread; yet by the Almighty's will and power, fire lost its heat with respect to the three Hebrew Children, when they walked unhurt, in the midst of the Babylonian furnace: and the infernal fire, by the same divine power, retaining its burning quality, for the torment of the unhappy victims of God's wrath, there confined, is for their greater punishment deprived of light: scorching flames, with intense darkness, being ever commemorated in the Scriptures, as the joint properties of that instrument of the divine vengeance. Let one example more out of numbers, parallel to the foregoing, tho' of a different kind, suffice, which is, of iron losing its gravity, when ELISHA, by the miraculous power he was indued with, made an axe, that had dropt into the river, come up floating on the surface. 4 Kings vi. 7.

HOWEVER, it may be said, that the knot of the difficulty still remains unsolved, how the accidents can subsist out of their natural subject? to this I answer, that the difficulty is not of such an enormous size as to be insurmountable: the possibility of their separate and independant existence is not without it's foundation in reason, and is maintained upon peripatetic principles. But whether in this case, quantity is the support of the other accidents, and in what manner quantity itself subsists, are philosophical niceties, which I leave to the discussion of the curious; we have no other task lying on our hands, than to shew the existence of the accidents, out of their substance, a possibility to the divine power; and this I think evident from the following reflexions and proofs.

THEREFORE, I say, that the same divine power, that has suspended the activity of the agent, or taken away
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from it its properties, as we have just seen, can surely support the properties or accidents out of their subject; one miracle is no more astonishing than the other, and therefore it will be presumption in man, so to circumscribe the Omnipotency, as to contest the equal possibility to it, of both of them: however, if nothing less than facts can be sufficient to vindicate the divine attribute against obstinate scepticism, I think that the Scriptural instances we have produced before of the deception of our senses, with regard to the substances in the manna, and the angelical apparitions, equally evince this second verity of the separate existence of the accidents out of their subject. It was experienced in the manna, relatively to taste and quantity; for it tasted of that which it was not, according to the fancy and inclination of the eater, relishing of flesh to one, of fish to another, of fowl, vegetables, and so of the rest. And as to the quantity, such a portion was allotted to each family, and they that gathered more had no more, and they that collected less, had no less. Again, with respect to the apparitions of Angels, the figure, mien and all the attitudes and appearances of man visibly subsisted without the reality.

THE distinction then, and divisibility of the accidents from their substance, and their subsisting out of their natural subject, by the divine power, being so evident and well attested from irrefragable scriptural facts; it affords, I apprehend, a satisfactory answer to a formidable argument our adversaries affect to draw from a passage of THEODORET, in his controversy with the Eutychians, a set of pretended reformers of his time.

THESE heretics, under an outward show of op-pugning the Nestorian error, which had asserted two personalities in CHRIST, fell into the other extreme of confounding the two natures, the human and divine. The human nature, they thought, by the Hypostatic union, was so absorbed in the divine, like a drop of

honey mixed with the sea, as to lose its natural properties; and in this consequence consisted the stress, malignity and drift of their erroneous opinion. Among the arguments, they pretended to produce in support of it, they drew a parity from the mysterious change operated in the Holy Eucharist: and it was here THEODORET closed with them, and undertook to foil them with their own weapons; "You are caught, *says he*, "in your own nets." For though, pursues he, there be an undoubted change of the substances, and therefore, what was Bread before, is no more Bread after consecration; yet the properties of Bread remain. These are his words, as recited and rendered by CARDINAL PERRON, and many of the Learned: "The "mystical symbols, after consecration, do not depart "from their own nature; for they remain in the figure "and shape of their former substance, and are visible "and tangible, as they were before; μένει γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς "πρωτέρας οὐσίας καὶ τῆς σχήματος καὶ τῆς εἰδός. But "they are understood to be the things, which they "are made, and so they are believed; and they are "adored, as being the things which they are believed." Theod. dial. 2.

FROM this whole controversy betwixt THEODORET and his antagonist I draw the following inferences. 1. That he believed, himself, a real change of the substances in the Eucharist, because he says it appeared one thing, but was believed to be another, and was adored for what it was believed. 2. It is certain that this substantial change was agreed on by both sides; and therefore becomes a proof that it was the uncontroverted belief of the Church at that time; because the Eutychian argues from it in favour of his erroneous opinion of the confusion of the two natures in CHRIST after the Incarnation. 3. Directly to our present purpose, it appears from the course of their arguments, that the accidents, or properties of Bread were allowed to subsist out of their natural subject, and to be the object of our senses; because, as the Eutychian

chian did not contend for the destruction of the entity of the human nature in CHRIST, but only for its being swallowed up, as it were, in the Divine Nature, and losing its natural properties; the medium he made use of, proved in that respect directly the contrary; since the properties of Bread and Wine, in the Eucharist, confessedly remained; which made THEODORET tell his adversary, "That he was taken in his own nets."

SUCH was the import of this celebrated passage out of THEODORET, so often trumped up by our adversaries, and so little availing their purpose. The objections, then, against the Real Presence from the testimony or information of our external senses, being so weak and unconvincing, whether we suppose them to be deceived, as they undoubtedly are, with respect to the substance, or not to be deceived, having the accidents for their immediate objects; the Sacramentarians, rather than give up, are willing to rally once more their broken forces from reason: and it is by impugning replication, as the direct sequel from Transubstantiation, that they think to give the decisive blow: that, they are pleased to deem impossible, and therefore conclude this incredible. For how, say they, is it possible for the same identical Body to be existent at the self-same time in several places? or to speak in the language of the schools; how can it be replicated? to this I answer, If it be asked how we conceive the thing, or it be expected we should clear up the mystery, so as to bring it within the reach of our limited comprehension, this is what no Catholic ever pretended to do. Mysteries are to be believed, not to be comprehended. The Jews asked how CHRIST *could give his Flesh to eat*, &c. Deists contest the possibility of most scriptural miracles; but St. CYRIL of Alexandria reputes all such questions and doubts, as blasphemy; because, circumscribing Omnipotence, or measuring it by an unequal rule, our shallow understanding. If then the possibility of replication, (to
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speak in terms) be urged as a contradiction, we deny it. To be, and not to be, at the self-same time and place; or concomitantly to be and not to be at all, is certainly a contradiction in nature; and therefore impossible: but, to be in two, or many places at once, is no contradiction; and though above human conception, yet possible to the Divine Power, which can do more than we are able to comprehend. *Com-penetration*, as it is termed in the schools, that is, the co-existence of one body in the self-same individual space, with another body or solid, is as inconceivable, as for the same body to be in several places at once; and yet of the first miracle the gospels furnish us with incontestable instances, in CHRIST's ineffable birth, without prejudice to his Blessed Mother's virginity: in his rising out of the sepulchre, *The heavy stone it was covered with being unmoved*, Mark xv. 46. And in his entering into the room where his disciples were met together, after his resurrection, *The doors being shut*, John xx. 19, 26.

THESE are facts not more certain in themselves, as being transmitted to us by the inspired penmen, than evident proofs that a glorified and spiritualized body is not confined to the laws of a body in its condition of mortality and corruption: and who will be so hardy as to say that replication is not equally compatible, as well as compenetration with a body in its glorious state, and possible to the divine power.

OUR Blessed Saviour after his ascension up to Heaven appeared to SAUL on Earth in his road to Damascus; for this Apostle himself, writing to the Corinthians after his conversion, says, *After that, he (CHRIST) was seen by JAMES, then by all the Apostles; and last of all he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time*; 1 Cor. xv. 7, 8. whether the Apostle alludes to the apparition just mentioned in his way to Damascus, or to any other, it is certain that he speaks of CHRIST's appearing to him in the same manner after his ascension, as he had appeared to the rest of the Apostles

Apostles before it: now, it is the opinion of several divines, that CHRIST on this occasion was in two places at once, in Heaven and on Earth; and whatsoever others may think to the contrary, this opinion must, at least, be allowed to carry the height of probability, and is partly founded on the following passage from the Acts, where it is written of CHRIST, *Whom Heaven indeed must receive until the times of the restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 4. which insinuates CHRIST's stability in his glorious state. The Church of England in it's fourth article, seems to espouse this opinion, and to allude to the authority just cited, saying, that CHRIST *ascended into Heaven, where he sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day*.

THEREFORE, if according to this, he be permanently fixed in Heaven, he must, as often as he appeared on Earth, have been here and there at the self same time; and therefore, why not in ten thousand in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, since the multiplication of a miracle can cost the divine power no more than its single operation?

WE read in the Gospels that CHRIST multiplied five barley loaves and five fishes, so as to be sufficient for the corporal subsistence of five thousand people; and if he has bequeathed his sacred Body and Blood for our spiritual nouriture, is he less able to replicate it for this much more desirable effect? and that the multiplying the loaves and fishes, was by replication, seems to be insinuated by St. JOHN, in his relation of this miraculous event, when he says, *That they filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves that remained*, John vi. 13, which would not be literally true, if they were multiplied by any other way than by replication. And whereas CHRIST, the next day, declared to the same people, that had partaken of the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the more wonderful miracle or mystery of giving them afterwards his Body and Blood for their meat and drink, one seems to have been intended as a prelude to the other; and as a preparation

preparation to make them come more readily into the belief of the feasibility of the second miracle, by being witnesses to his operating the first, and that as one, so both were done by the same divine power and after the same manner, *viz.* by replication. But, without having recourse to miraculous proofs, there are mysteries in nature of this kind, which human understanding, and all the wisdom of man is unable to unravel. The surprising increase from generation, and the production of thousands of fruit from a single kernel, is what the greatest philosopher cannot account for; the fact we know, the manner of it is a mystery: and, as SOLOMON observed long ago, man in his inquisitive investigation into the prodigies of nature, and the operations of the Deity, as author of nature, *vanishes away and is lost in his own thoughts*. Let us therefore not presume to measure the infinite extent of the divine power by our limited knowledge, but rather conclude with the great St. AUSTIN, that, "Almighty God" can do what is above the reach of human understanding to comprehend."

AND in the point, we have just discussed, of CHRIST's replication in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, St. CHRYSOSTOM, in the two following extracts, avers it as a miracle, calling for our admiration, but not to be doubted of: "Oh miracle, says he, oh divine bounty, he who sits at the right hand of the Father, is at the very same instant in all mens hands;" *viz.* at the time that they handle the Sacrament, L. de sacerdot. c. 4. And again: "The mystery here changes for thee earth into Heaven; for I will shew thee here placed upon earth, that which is most precious and adorable in Heaven; the Body of the King (that is CHRIST) is the most magnificent thing in Heaven, but you may now see it upon earth." Hom. de sancto Philagonio.

In spite then of our shallow comprehension; in spite of any opposition the sublimity of the mystery meets with from human reason, it is most certain that CHRIST being

being GOD as well as man, could by his divine power change Bread and Wine into his sacred Body and Blood: And therefore, he could also replicate himself, that is, be in several places at once, and operate the other manifold wonders, that were essential or consequent to the accomplishment of this mystery: 'tis nothing less than blasphemy to doubt of it. His love to us was so excessive as to prompt him to execute, what by his Omnipotency he was enabled, and what in his wisdom he judged convenient to do: and he having positively assured us that he has operated this mysterious change, we shall offer violence to all his divine attributes, to his power, his wisdom, his love and veracity, if we take upon us to contest the truth of it.

THIS reflection might alone be sufficient, to refute any other objections to the Real Presence of CHRIST's Body in the Eucharist, drawn from its seeming contradiction to human reason and our senses. Such are some consequences ensuing from the mystery, which our adversaries think to imply an absurdity and an indignity incompatible with a Supreme Being; as that we should be said to eat the flesh of the GOD we adore; that it should be liable to many irreverences from men, and to several accidental abuses from irrational creatures. But these consequences can only be shocking to those, who measure the incomprehensibility of the divine mysteries by their shallow understanding. Averroes the philosopher, blasphemously scoffed at the Christians heretofore, for eating their GOD, and St. PAUL compendiously answered all such blasphemers, saying, *That we speak the wisdom of GOD in a mystery that is hidden; that the sensual man perceiveth not these things, that are of the spirit of GOD, for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, &c.* 1 Cor. ii. 7.

IF mysteries were to be canvassed from their consequences, they would cease to be what they are; infidelity would triumph and religion be no more. The creation is involved in mysteries, and is attended by consequences seemingly the most shocking and incre-

dible; for, that God, should make creatures indued with reason and liberty, who would abuse these gifts to such an excess of ingratitude, as almost in the instant of their receiving their existence; to rebel against the divine author of their being; that he vouchsafes to submit to the outrageous affronts daily and hourly offered to him by men, in the hellish curses, imprecations, and blasphemies, they vomit out against him, and to bear to be reviled by them infinite other ways, is so amazing and transcending all conception, that nothing but our being accustomed to such indignities, and our want of comprehending rightly the malice of sin, make them not to be shocking to us. Again, the mystery of the Incarnation is attended by so many striking circumstances, incredible to human understanding, that there is none, about which more heresies have been raised, none that has been more contested than this. In a word, the sufferings, passion, and death of a God-man were from the very beginning, as the Apostle observes, *A scandal to the Jews and a stumbling-block to the Gentiles.* In all these mysteries the Almighty soars above our narrow views, he has placed them out of our sight, and would not submit them to our limited comprehension. And in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist it is also certain, that our blessed Saviour did not judge proper to accommodate it to our senses, nor to human reason; and that therefore, in our disquisitions into it, these are no way to be consulted. CHRIST's sacred Body in the Eucharist has a spiritual existence; and therefore, as it is not confined to the laws of a natural body, it is equally incapable of being affected by the alterations or injuries incident to a body in that mortal state. CHRIST, says St. PAUL, *being risen, dies no more,* The outward accidents are obnoxious to alteration and corruption; CHRIST's immortal body, couched under these accidents, is incorruptible: they may be abused by man or beast, be spit upon, trampled on, and many other ways defiled, while that will be unhurt, unaffected. The greatest profanation or indignity that can
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be offered to it, is from human malice, when received into a stomach polluted with sin : and this the Apostle so far from disowning, warns the unworthy communicant against the horrid sacrilege, telling him, *That whosoever shall eat the Bread, or drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord,* 1 Cor. xi. 27.

EVERY divine institution is, in a comparative and proportionable degree, susceptible of a similar profanation and abuse, which should influence our understandings in no other respect, than to make us sensible of the extent of God's goodness and love to man, that for the sake of the righteous, who by making a due use of these blessings, do reap benefit from them, he would leave them to the abuse of the unrighteous, who either partake of them unworthily, or make slight of them to their own condemnation and eternal perdition. The whole system of religion is thus scoffed at, and made a subject of profane rallery by infidels and unbelievers : but their scoffs and slanders light on their own head, as DANIEL told the infamous elders, who had belied the chaste Susanna. The Deity and his divine attributes are invaded with luciferian impotency by atheists and theists ; the Church disregarded, and her authority controled by heretics ; her morals and precepts transgressed by her own undisciplined children ; and nothing so holy, that has not by unhallowed lips been burlesqued, or by evil manners profaned. Yet *God is what He is*, omnipotent, eternal, all-perfect, in spite of Lucifer's impudent arrogance to dethrone him ; in spite of idolaters and atheists audacious madness to undeify him : or the senseless folly of deists to extenuate his divine prerogatives. Religion will remain pure, unspotted, unblemished, maugre the most diabolical malice to blacken it ; the Church, in defiance of all the powers of hell, is ever immoveable ; the mysteries of our holy faith will be unaffected, tho' denied by some and reviled by others. And to conclude, The mysterious spiritual manner of existence of

CHRIST's Body in the Holy Eucharist, puts it out of the reach of injury from internal malice, or external irreverences and indignities. Vain therefore are the pretences for calling in question the ineffable mystery, on account of its consequences.

LET, then, our Reformers cry out, as much as they please, that the Real Presence of CHRIST's Body in the Eucharist is an incredible mystery, that it shocks their reason and contradicts their senses: let them make this the foundation of their refusing an assent to it; by this conduct they only chime with the incredulous JEWS, who said before them, hearing our blessed Saviour's declaration, that he would give them *his Flesh to eat and his Blood to drink, that it was a hard saying, who can bear it*, John, c. vi.

CATHOLICS argue in a different manner. It is certainly a great and stupendous mystery, above human comprehension, and out of the reach of our senses; but yet supported by the oracle of truth, the express words of CHRIST himself; and therefore, in competition with these, we judge the information of our senses ought to be disregarded, and that our understanding should bend with a blind and unlimited submission to the divine authority. CHRIST's declaration is the foundation and bulwark of our faith, and the confutation of their infidelity. His mercy, in the institution of this Sacrament of love, is moreover the support of our hope, and the aggravation of their ingratitude.

AND, indeed, that the stupendousness of this mystery, and the excess of love, our blessed Saviour CHRIST has manifested in the accomplishment of it, should be the grounds for any one's disbelieving it, or a motive for rejecting it, is, in some degree, as inconceivable to every rational mind, divested of passion and prejudice, as the mystery itself. Yet so it is: a God incarnate opens the whole treasure of his mercy, in order to make a tender of it to man, in the amplest and most effectual manner it was possible to his infinite power, wisdom

wisdom and goodness, by bequeathing himself to him in the august and ever adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist, and yet our Reformers disdain the gracious legacy, by questioning the truth of it: a conduct which argues no less ingratitude, as I just observed, than infidelity; and which puts our understanding to almost as great a nonplus to divine the cause of it, or to discover any tolerable reasons to justify it, as to fathom the mystery itself of Transubstantiation. For, the Sacramentarians may alledge, as much as they please, the information of their senses and conviction of reason; the plea is so evidently vain and groundless, that it is plain their incredulity must flow from some other source.

THE true cause then of their disbelief, I apprehend to be this; a man plunged in vice, sensuality and pleasures, is easily influenced to disclaim a mercy which he is fully conscious to himself he has no right nor title to partake of. He first, by a habit of sin, renders himself unworthy of the ineffable blessing, and then doubts of its existence. Vice blinds the understanding and perverts the will; pride and immorality are ever observed to be the mother of heresy. For, though prejudice of education, and a want of due information may be a means of retaining those deluded souls in their erroneous belief, who take up with the religion they profess upon trust, and, as it were, by inheritance, without enquiring further into the grounds of it; yet the causes I have just assigned, certainly gave birth to error, and were the first establishment of it.

CALVIN, ZUINGLIUS and the herd of Sacramentarians, who first oppugned the Real Presence, were profligate libertines, before they became arch-heretics: their hearts were vitiated before their understanding was brought over to infidelity; or that they, at least, attempted to be open abettors of it; their faith became a sacrifice to their sensual appetites: they decried the use of the Sacrament, then contested the
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essence of it, supporting a licentious life by an erroneous faith.

THUS these ring-leaders of the pretended Reformation excluded from themselves and their profelytes the participation of the greatest blessing an infinite, incarnate wisdom could invent in man's behalf: the most stupendous miracle an omnipotent power could operate, and the greatest mercy, an infinite goodness could bestow!

AND, therefore, how widely they swerve, in this material point as well as others, from the character of Reformers, which they arrogantly assumed, the matter itself sufficiently declares, and every person divested of passion and prejudice, from an impartial view of the foregoing premises, may be a competent judge.

C H A P. IV.

The article of the Sacrament of Penance considered.

THE Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the truth and essence whereof we have discussed and thoroughly proved, in the Catholic sense, in the last controversy, is, according to the Catholic further acceptance of it, considered with reference to its use, and the benefit it is of to the faithful, called the Sacrament of the Living; because it is required that the receiver should be alive to Almighty God, by sanctifying grace, before he can be judged in a fit disposition to partake of that ineffable blessing; so that, though agreeably to the nature of a Sacrament, it is a direct means, instituted by CHRIST, of conveying grace to our soul, yet it is such not by giving us sanctifying grace we had not, but by bestowing on us an accumulation of grace, or an addition to what we had.

THERE are also other Sacraments, which by the Catholic Church are termed the Sacraments of the dead; because

because they are the merciful means, instituted by CHRIST, of raising us from the death of sin to the life of grace.

OF these, the Catholic Church looks on the Sacrament of Penance, commonly called Confession, to be one of the most beneficial to us, in our present unhappy state of forfeited justice; and is moreover a condition generally pre-required towards a worthy participation of the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist: and therefore in the order of the controversy in hand, and for the importance of the subject, the nature, meaning, use and benefit of this Sacrament, deserves to come next under our consideration.

THE Sacrament of Penance is, in its own tendency and signification, so adapted to the exigences of our corrupt nature, that it is a matter of astonishment how it could ever come into the heads of pretenders to a godly Reformation to lay it aside; and it certainly is incumbent on them to shew incontestable reasons to justify this extraordinary proceeding.

EVEN their own disciples were soon aware of this gross oversight of their leaders, in leaving out of their reform, so obvious and powerful a restraint upon man's corrupt inclinations and manners. The town of Nuremburgh, which had very early embraced the new gospel, is a notorious instance of it. The magistrates thereof seeing with regret that the people, instead of being bettered by their late change, were become more depraved, and had run into the most shameful and impudent licentiousness; and imputing the evil to the barrier of confession being taken away; they unanimously addressed the Emperor Charles V. that so salutary a check upon libertinism might be restored again by his imperial authority. The proposal was received, as may be imagined, with laughter; for, when CHRIST's divine ordinance was disregarded, it were not to be expected that any human law would prove more successful: the fact however is certain, being

being credibly attested by Dominicus Sotus, Sot. l. 4. sentent. dist. 18. q. 1. art. 1. who, as he was confessor to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, had the means of being informed of these transactions of the times. In the mean while, as the fact was such, it evinces the necessity of auricular confession, and its fitness to be an effectual remedy to the disorders of our soul, acknowledged even by adversaries.

WE have another instance, of a more recent date, of the like frank acknowledgement, from Protestants themselves, of the divine institution, as well as of the usefulness of Confession. When the late Dutchess of York, first wife to King James II. justly scrupling on this very point, opened her difficulties to two eminent Prelates of the Church of England, SHELDON and BLANDFORD, Bishops of Canterbury and Worcester; they undertook to resolve her no otherwise than by candidly owning, that Confession was undoubtedly a means of grace of CHRIST's institution; that they wished so effectual a help to salvation had been retained within the Reformed Churches, and bemoaned so material an omission as the effect of hurry and precipitation, with which the work of the Reformation was conducted. Now, I presume to think that this unsatisfactory answer, though the best the badness of the cause would admit of, must make the same impression on every unprejudiced judgment, it did on this virtuous Princess, to convince him that a work, so essentially defective, cannot be thought to be the production of Light; or to be inspired and conducted by the directions of the Holy Ghost.

IN sudden revolutions of state, and alterations of government, which are the pure works of man, where every thing is often-times begun and carried on with hurry and confusion; blunders and omissions in the new modelling the political constitution are easily accounted for; but in an evangelical Reformation, in which the Church is pretended to be brought back, under the directions of Heaven, to its primitive purity,

purity, no fundamental slips or omissions can be admitted of, or even imagined; and therefore this material error must be imputed to some other cause, which I apprehend to be this: As the Reformers thought fit to reform away, and to discard the essence of the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, 'tis no wonder that Penance underwent the same fate; for, when it could be of no further service as a preparation for that august Sacrament, which was one principal use of it, and as it was otherwise intirely disrelishing to our corrupt palates; pursuant to the drift of the Reformation, which was, seemingly, to cook up a religion not the most wholesome and salutary, but the most toothsome, this was to be reformed away amongst the other unfavoury articles of the old religion.

It must indeed be owned, that LUTHER and his adherents, who had not the confidence to withstand undeniable proofs and conviction itself, of the truth of the Real Presence in the Eucharist, have shewn themselves also more scrupulous about the present article of auricular confession, than some of their reforming brethren, and in particular inveigh against the Calvinists for wholly rejecting it, (*Antichrist. prognos. fin. Mund. p. 140, 141.*) and by their antagonists are therefore nicknamed our New Popes. LUTHER himself particularly recommends the use of confession at the hour of death, as does the Church of England hereafter instanced. “A man, *says he*, being at the point of death, let him call the Priest to him, to whom to confess his sins: if he absolves him, he may rest and die content with his absolution, as if it came from God himself; for he has reason to rely as much on the Priest’s absolution, as if God had sent an Angel, an Apostle, or even CHRIST himself to impart it to him.”

BUT now to come to those who reject this salutary and effectual remedy for the disorders of our souls, And to enter into the heart of the question, it will be necessary to premise two or three postulatus equally

admitted by both sides; I mean, by the sounder part of the Reformation, as well as by Catholics. I say therefore, first, that the merits and sufferings of CHRIST alone radically cancel the guilt of sin in whatsoever manner or degree of malice it is contracted: that these are the condign satisfaction for it to the Divine Justice, and are, no doubt, self-sufficient to discharge the whole mass of sin that has been, will be, or can be committed. This is an article of faith which no Christian, of whatsoever sect or denomination, will presume to contest.

I say secondly, that, in the present order of Providence, since the establishment of the law of Grace, the said merits of CHRIST have not usually their actual effect, but inasmuch as they are applied to us by such particular means or instruments, instituted by CHRIST, for this desirable purpose.

I say thirdly, that the Sacraments, so called, are these means of Grace, or the channels thro' which the benefit of CHRIST's merits and sufferings, his sanctifying grace, is conveyed to our soul for the aforesaid end, viz. for the effectual cancelling of sin, and our reconciliation to the Divine Justice, injured by sin: As for instance, the Sacrament of Baptism, in virtue of CHRIST's institution, applying to us his infinite merits and sufferings, is acknowledged by the generality of the Reformation, as well as Catholics, to wash away the guilt of original sin, contracted by our first Parents in Paradise, and from them entailed on us: in which respect Baptism is, no doubt, a most providential and singular blessing, in affording us so easy and practicable a remedy to our fundamental disorder, and an effectual release from the devil's slavery. And whereas the Reformed Churches, or the more rational of them, are thus far of accord with us in theory and practice; what becomes a subject of astonishment is that, avowing the existence of these means of mercy, they should be so short-sighted as not to see into our further wants; but that, on the contrary, they

they should even disclaim the other means of Grace, equally adapted to the said wants and exigencies of our sinful state!

IN order to explain my meaning, and to set this matter in the clearest light, I must observe that there is a strict analogy between our spiritual infirmities, the disorders of our soul, and every bodily contagion and inveterate disease. These latter, for instance, even when the infection, by the medicinal power, is removed, leave frequently behind them fatal symptoms, and a bad habit of body, subjecting us to the danger of relapses, which, so often as they return, we have an occasion for their remedy to be repeated: In like manner our soul is not so cleansed from the infection of original sin, in the laver of Baptism, but that the dregs and effects of it lurk behind, called the fuel of sin, pregnant with innumerable other disorders; and which, without a peculiar circumspection on our own side, and the extraordinary grace of God to prevent them, or his gracious remedies to cure them, must bring us inevitably to our spiritual death and ruin.

Now can we believe that the all-seeing Providence of God, who is so watchful over us and tender of our welfare that a hair of our head does not fall without his knowledge and permission, who constantly proportions his helps to our indigencies: can we believe, I say, that he would abandon us in these necessitous circumstances, in these times of distress? Could the Eternal Word, who abased himself so far as to assume our human nature and to suffer an opprobrious death in order to cancel sin, to stem the current of man's iniquities, to provide us with means to keep out of the snares of our spiritual enemy; or being unhappily hampered therein, to supply us with his aid to extricate ourselves out of them: could this merciful Saviour leave imperfect an undertaking so becoming his goodness, so glorious to himself, and so beneficial to us? Could this loving physician, who had prescribed

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us so prompt and effectual a remedy to a disorder not personally our own, but only entailed on us by inheritance, omit to provide one for those of our own contracting, which being more grievous on our side, and more frequent, we have a greater exigency of his special and effectual relief? No, this is not credible, it was not suitable to his Providence, his love and mercy. Let the Reformers get themselves clear, as they can, of these inconsistencies, and of the just reproach of being injurious to a divine, infinitely benign Providence, by presuming to charge upon it it's want to us in these emergent necessities, and to dare to contest the existence of the most conspicuous and beneficial means of mercy he could confer upon us.

THE Catholic Church, on the contrary, is positive that our bountiful Saviour, not more our Redeemer in paying off a full, redundant ransom for our sins, than a tender and provident physician in prescribing a remedy, as an antidote and cure to the evil, has given us as effectual a remedy as we could wish for, in the Sacrament of Penance, commonly called *Confession*; not by its becoming an encouragement to sin, in imboldening us in the repetition of it, as our adversaries unjustly misrepresent it; but as an obvious, practical means to rise out of that deplorable state, by virtue of the keys or patents of remission of sins, delivered by CHRIST to his Church; and as a powerful preservative against a relapse, in consequence to the essential dispositions and conditions prerequisite to a good and valid Confession. In this sense the Catholic Church recommends and inculcates the use of it to her children: in this sense I undertake to prove it from Scripture, tradition, and antiquity, to be a divine ordinance; that is, to be instituted by CHRIST, as our merciful Redeemer and provident physician.

SECTION I.

The institution of the Sacrament of Penance proved from Scripture and Antiquity; and its benefit to mankind, in his present state, enforced from the nature of the Sacrament, and our want of these means of mercy.

OUR blessed Saviour, just before his Ascension, having delivered to his disciples their apostolical commission of promulgating his name and doctrine to all nations; to the same patents he also annexed a special and distinctive power of binding and releasing sin. The tenor of their commission runs thus: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed upon them, and said to them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.*" John xx. 21, 22, 23.

To speak first, to the preamble of this commission, it is to be observed that, the authority CHRIST, as the son of man, had received from his Eternal Father, *That he makes over to his Apostles as his ministers, As the Father sent me, I also send you,* John xx. 21. but with this difference, that he was the principal, acting by an absolute power immediately lodged in himself, they his deputies, to act not in their own right, but by commission from him, and in his name. CHRIST specifies here only one part of the power, he intrusts them with, *viz.* the act of judicature, or of releasing and retaining sins; and that CHRIST, as man, had power to forgive sins; that he was constituted by his Eternal Father Sovereign Judge over mens consciences, while he was on earth, and that he acted during his mortal sojournment on earth, in that capacity, is what he himself plainly declared to the Jews on several occasions, as is related by each of the Evangelists. *Neither, says he in one place, does the Father judge any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son.*

Son. John v. 22. And presently after he assigns the reason thereof, *And he hath given him power to do judgment, because he is the SON of MAN*, John ibid. v. 27. When, on another occasion the paralytic was brought to him, in order to obtain the cure of his body, as it is related by three of the Evangelists, CHRIST first, in reward of his extraordinary faith, bestowed upon him the cure of his soul, telling him, *Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee*, Matth. ix. 2. & alibi. And, when the scribes then present, viewing CHRIST barely in his human capacity, conceived scandal at him, and thought he blasphemed, in usurping a power of forgiving sins not belonging to man but to God alone; did our blessed Lord, who penetrated into their thoughts, disabuse them by declaring his Divinity, and ascribing thereto his power? No; on the contrary he gave them to understand that the privilege belonged to him, as he was man: *But that you may know*, said he to them, *that the Son of man hath power to forgive sins, (then said he to the man sick of the palsy) arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house*. Matth. ix. 2, &c.

It is also certain that this privilege of CHRIST, as man, was then peculiar to himself, never given, as St. CHRYSOSTOM, hereafter cited, observes, to any man upon earth before, nor to Angel or Archangel. As God, he, to be sure, from the beginning forgave the sins of men in Heaven; and tho' it was ordained in the old law, Lev. v. and Numb. v. to make a special confession to the Priests of some grievous sins there specified (an imperfect type of what was to be done afterwards in the law of Grace) and tho' proper sacrifices were appointed to be offered, and atonement to be made for these several offences; yet these were only conditions of forgiveness, while the forgiveness itself was given in Heaven. When DAVID was penitent for his heinous crimes, the Prophet NATHAN, on the part of God, only declared them cancelled,—*Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath also put away thy*

thy sin, thou shalt not die, 2 Sam. xii. 13. not arrogating to himself the power of absolving him. This was a privilege, as I said before, reserved for the new covenant of the law of Grace, first conferred by the Eternal Father upon CHRIST in his sacred humanity, and by him transferred to his Apostles, as his ministers and deputies, and from them to descend to their successors; viz. that contrary to what had ever passed on earth before, where sins were wont first to be cancelled in Heaven, and the pardon then, if at all, declared upon earth; now the sentence of judicature should be first pronounced by man here on earth, and then ratified in Heaven: here the Priest, by the authority delegated to him from CHRIST, giving absolution from sin, and there sealed and confirmed by CHRIST himself. This order of the acts of judicature between the two tribunals, the celestial and terrestrial, this judicial power vested in the Priest of the new law, are even clearly distinguished in the tenor of the Apostles commission above cited, *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, &c.* John xx. 22. And it was CHRIST's establishing this supreme tribunal of judicature here upon earth, which made the great Apostle of the Gentiles cry out that *He had given to us the ministry of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 18. So positive was he of this judicial power, of binding and loosing sins, being lodged in the Apostles and their successors; but at what time precisely they were first of all installed in their ministry, is quite impertinent to the main point, of their being absolutely vested with the prerogative. The commission St. JOHN speaks of, given after the Resurrection, seems to be no more than the fulfilling of a former promise of it, or a confirmation of a prior instalment, when some while before his Passion he said to them, *Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.* Matth. xviii. 18. — supposing this last text to imply an actual delivery of
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the keys, and not a bare promise of a future delivery ; in this hypothesis the other text from St. JOHN, being the relation of a fact of a later date, must be understood only to insinuate the extension of this authority to an executive power, when entering on their Apostolical charge they are directed to exercise it in this and every other shape.

WHICHSOEVER way we are to distinguish these sacred extracts, the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, or the power of forgiving sins, is so expressly given and declared in one or both of them, that unless our adversaries in this, as well as other controversial points, had equivalently laid on us the ridiculous task, *adlum agere*, of proving what is already plain and evident, I must be thought to be very idle, in taking upon me to explain texts which are clear and perspicuous in themselves beyond every gloss and explanation possible : they speak very plain their own meaning, that is, the meaning which the Church has always understood them to import ; to wit, the delivery of the keys to the Apostles, to whom these speeches were directed, whereby they were vested with an absolute power of binding and loosing sins ; and, in consequence to their patents all who succeed them in their Apostolical charge inherit the same authority ; because every ordinance or institution of CHRIST, (as has been observed in a foregoing controversy) which by its natural tendency is calculated for the good of mankind in general, or of the Church in particular, must be judged to remain in full force, so long as the Church has a being, and the same occasion or exigency of the institution subsists : but the universal exigence of this institution, and the general use and benefit resulting from it to mankind, is what we have already hinted at in the beginning of this chapter, and shall have occasion of shewing further by and by.

Now the main question is, how this Sacrament was to be brought into practice, in order to be productive of this fruit and advantage to mankind for which it was instituted and designed. Here is a spiritual tribunal erected

erected by CHRIST, in which the Apostles and their successors are constituted the arbitrators and judges of every thing belonging to that court, that is, are endued with a sovereign jurisdiction over the consciences of all those who should come under their pastoral care, and a judicial power of loosing and binding their respective misdemeanours. But how, I say, is this to be put into execution? if we are to resolve this doubt from a similitude of circumstances and causes, which come before temporal tribunals, 'tis evident that it is practicable no other way than by a previous cognisance of the crimes which come under their jurisdiction. Every act of temporal judicature presupposes a knowledge of the cause: in order to be enabled to release, reprieve, or condemn, with any form of justice, 'tis a condition prerequisite, and indispensable, to be apprised of the state of the criminal; and therefore, from the dictates of common sense and the nature of the thing, 'tis manifest that the same conditions and forms of justice are equally indispensably annexed to this spiritual tribunal instituted by CHRIST.

THIS, and no more, is meant and practised by the Catholic Church in the use of this Sacrament of mercy called Penance or Confession; where the Penitent is both the criminal, self-accuser, and evidence; the Priest, in virtue of the authority delegated to him by CHRIST, sits as judge, and his sentence is the act of judicature; which is favourable or unfavourable, according to the respective dispositions of the Penitent. It is inconceivable how CHRIST's injunction to the Apostles of binding and loosing sins could be executed in any other manner; and we have an insinuation from St. JAMES the Apostle, that it was in this form, and in consequence to such previous informations, that they exercised their judicial power; for, in his Catholic epistle, he recommends to them *to confess their faults one to another*; St. James v. 16. that is to the Priests, whom just before he had directed them to call for. In the Acts of the Apostles we are also told, that

it was the practice of the faithful to confess and declare their deeds. Acts xix. 18. I might add, that as the law of grace was prefigured by the Mosaic law in most essential points, so this divine institution had also its type in the Levitic law, where it was ordained, that such as were infected with leprosy (the emblem of a soul in the state of sin) should shew themselves to the Priest. Levit. xiii.

THE ordinances above quoted from Lev. v. and Num. v. of manifesting to the Priest some special sins or disorders of the soul, though not attended with the Sacramental advantage it has now by the institution of CHRIST, was yet a livelier expression of it.

AFTER the undeniable proofs, we have produced from the inspired writings, for the divine institution of the Sacrament of Penance, it may be judged unnecessary, to bring a confirmation of it from the unanimous belief and practice of the primitive ages of the Church; if this were requisite, we could trace it from the Apostles down to the epoch of the pretended Reformation, and we have so many unexceptionable vouchers to it, as there are learned doctors and fathers of those different times. And, indeed, the Sacrament of Penance, meaning auricular Confession, it being in this shape that it is used in the Church, and as such the object of dislike to our squeamish Reformers, is no doubt, so difficult in itself, and forbidding to flesh and blood, that if it had been a novelty imposed on the belief of the faithful, and unwarranted by Scripture, or an unjust tyranny usurped over men's consciences, it were a matter of wonder how it ever got established in the Church without the most remarkable and general opposition: still more surprising that persons of every rank, condition and station of life, the laity as well as clerics, kings as well as subjects should submit their necks to the yoke, and not disdain to throw themselves at the feet of a Priest, to unfold to him the inmost secrets of their heart, the most shameful disorders of their soul, and to wait humbly

for his absolution. When, on the contrary, it cannot be disavowed, by our very enemies, that it had gained a peaceable possession in the Church, with the other articles of the Catholic Faith, for many centuries: when we dare take upon us to prove that it is to be traced up to the earliest times of the Church; and that none ever appeared against it, but anathematized or reputed Heretics; then we must conclude that Penance is of divine institution, and that the manner or use of it by auricular Confession is of Apostolic tradition: out of a cloud of these primitive evidences, for brevity's sake, I have only selected the few that follow.

THE Novatians, a sect that sprung up between the second and third century, were branded with marks of novelty for maintaining it sufficient to confess to God alone, as some of our modern innovators would pretend to do at present. St. AMBROSE makes mention of this opinion and taxes it as repugnant to CHRIST's divine institution. "The Novatians," says he, "re-
" serve the honour and power to God alone of remit-
" ting sin: but none do him a more glaring injury than
" they, who make void the commission of CHRIST;
" for, since he himself has said, *whose sins you forgive*
" *they are forgiven*, &c. who honours him most, he that
" accepts of CHRIST's institution," (as Catholics do)
" or he that rejects it," as the Novatians did formerly,
and Protestants now. St. Ambr. l. 1. de pen. c. 2. St. AUSTIN in several parts of his writings, censures the same fond opinion as erroneous, "Let no man," says he in one place, "say to himself I confess secretly
" to God, for this sufficing, without reason it is
" said, *whatsoever you loose on earth, shall be loosed*
" *in heaven*, without cause are the keys given to the
" Church of God. Thus we frustrate the Gospel,
" we make void the words of CHRIST, and vainly
" promise ourselves what he denies." viz. God's for-
giveness of our sins independantly of the prior judg-
ment and absolution, or the forgiveness of his ministers.
Aug. l. 50. Homeliarum Hom. 49. Again elsewhere

he speaks as follows, "There are some, who think
 " it suffices for salvation to confess to God alone;
 " and either thro' obstinacy, shame, or disdain will
 " not show themselves to the Priest. — But let them
 " not deceive themselves with the fond notion that
 " these pretences will excuse them, for the Priest's
 " judgment is to be submitted to, whom CHRIST has
 " not disdained to substitute his Vicar or Deputy.
 " Therefore ask the Priest to come unto thee, and
 " disclose to him thy conscience and the whole state
 " of thy soul. Let not the superstition of certain
 " dreamers seduce thee, who pretend that the bare
 " confession of our sins to God will save us without
 " the ministry of the Priest. We don't deny that
 " confession is to be made to God, but we aver, and
 " the sound doctrine and practice of the Church vouch
 " for it, that thou first hast occasion of the sentence
 " of the Priest, who may be a mediator to thy God
 " for thee; otherwise, how should the Divine ordi-
 " nance both of the old and new law be complied
 " with, *Go and shew yourselves to the Priest*, Lev. xiv.
 " *Confess your sins to one another*, St. James. Therefore
 " let the Priest be called for in God's place, to judge
 " of thy disorders; make known to him thy ways,
 " and he will give you the remedy of reconciliation."
 Aug. l. 1. de Visit. Infirm.

In the passage we have now cited, the holy Doctor asserts directly the Catholic doctrine in two points, viz. the insufficiency of confessing to God alone, and in consequence to this, the necessity and obligation of laying open the state of our souls before other judges of CHRIST's appointment, the Priests of his Church, by whom we are to be tried, condemned, or absolved according to our deserts. In another part of this same treatise he goes on to consider the process and nature of this court of judicature, and therein speaks of auricular confession in words so plain and explicit, as to prescribe the very method after which it is to be made: "Presuppose," says he, "that thou
 " art

“ art before the Angels of God, for the Priest is
 “ his Angel ; and so speak to him, with that reve-
 “ rence, that is due to God and his Angels ; *disclose*
 “ *unto him the secrets of thy conscience*: thou must re-
 “ member the time, place, and characters of the per-
 “ sons (yet concealing their names) with whom you
 “ have sinned.” Aug. lib. 2. de Visit. Infirm. c. 5.
 Now I appeal to the candid reader whether any Ca-
 tholic Catechist, at this time o’ day, explaining the
 method and form of auricular confession could be
 more clear and particular on the subject than this
 holy Father has been?

ST. BASIL a Father of the Greek Church delivers
 himself to the same effect, and in terms equally plain,
 significant, and instructive: “ Our sins,” says he, “ are
 “ to be discovered to them, to whom is committed
 “ the dispensing of the sacred mysteries of God ;
 “ for we see this form of penance primitively prac-
 “ tised, it being written in the Gospel that they con-
 “ fessed their sins to JOHN, and in the Acts that they
 “ confessed and declared their deeds to the Apostles.”
 Bas. in regul. Brev. Interrog. 288. It is to be ob-
 served that this Father, who lived in the fourth Cen-
 tury, by appealing to primitive times, and even to
 the practice of the Apostles themselves for the founda-
 tion of his doctrine, must have judged it to be of
 Apostolic tradition and divine institution.

IN short the Fathers in general are so clear and
 positive for the use of private confession, that even
 the Protestant Centurists candidly give up St. CYPRIAN
 and TERTULLIAN for abettors of it. Speaking of
 those primitive times, these Protestant historians tell
 us, “ That they were wont to give absolution for
 “ sins in this manner: The faithful were first to
 “ confess their sins, for this,” say they, “ does TER-
 “ TULLIAN, in his book *De Penitentia*, greatly re-
 “ commend and inculcate: and it appears from sun-
 “ dry places of St. CYPRIAN, that Private Confes-
 “ sion was customary in his time, wherein the faith-
 “ ful

“ful disclosed their sins, and even their internal
“wicked thoughts.” Cent. 3. Col. 127. and Cent. 4.
c. 6. Col. 429.

THE narrow limits of this essay will not allow me here to summon the whole band of primitive evidences to this Catholic article, *viz.* JEROM, ATHANASIUS, the two GREGORIES of the Eastern Church, and still higher, ORIGEN, CLEMENT, and innumerable others, who talked of Confession as of a matter undoubtedly of Divine institution; and the avowed practice of the Church. And the frank acknowledgment of Protestants, which we just heard, that they are indisputably on our side, render this trouble needless. I'll therefore only trespass on my reader with one more of these venerable vouchers, to whose testimony there can be no exception, to speak for the rest, because by a rule we have laid down in a foregoing controversy, what were the avowed sentiments of any orthodox Father, conspicuous for his sanctity and learning, in any dogmatical point, which does not appear to have been controverted by his cotemporaries, or recanted by himself, must be reputed the unanimous sentiments of the rest of the orthodox Fathers, his said cotemporaries, and to be the belief of the whole Catholic Church both then and before, by a continued succession of doctrine derived from the Apostles. I said, what appears to be the uncontroverted sentiments of any one orthodox Father, must be thus reputed to be the sense of the whole body of the Church; because tho' 'tis true that St. CYPRIAN, a glorious light and martyr of the Church, erred in the article of heretical baptism, yet it was, respectively to him, only an error of judgment, not of faith; because in his time it was a controverted point undecided by the Church. The same must be said of St. POLYCARP in the Asiatic Church, who varied from the general practice of the Church as to the day of celebrating Easter, by conforming to the time of the Jewish Pasch; a controversy not fully settled till a long time after,

after, by the first general Council of Nice. But none of these differences appear, in those primitive times, relating to the institution and use of the Sacrament of Penance; and the testimony I have to produce for it is clear, and beyond a reply: it is from St. CHRYSOSTOM, the great light of the Oriental Church, who delivers himself on this subject as follows: “Those who dwell
“ on earth, are enabled to dispense the things of
“ Heaven: to them power is given, which neither
“ Angel nor Archangels enjoy; for, to these it was
“ never said, *Whatsoever you shall bind on earth is bound
“ in Heaven, &c.* Earthly Princes have power to cast
“ into prison, but their power is restrained to bodies
“ only; whereas the bond we speak of reaches the
“ soul and Heaven itself, inasmuch as what Priests
“ do below, God ratifies above; and the Lord confirms the sentence of the servant. And what is this
“ but to have all power put into their hands to dispose of Heaven? *Whose sins you forgive, they are
“ forgiven; and whose sins you retain they are retained.*
“ What power can be greater than this? God the
“ Father has given all power of judging to his Son,
“ and *the Son has communicated all that same power to
“ Priests* — They not only regenerate us, but afterwards have power to forgive us our sins.” St. Chrys. lib. 3. de Sacerd. c. 5. Thus has this great and learned Father asserted the doctrine of Penance, in terms as clear and explicit as BELLARMINE, or any other the most zealous champion for Papacy, could have explained it at this present time; and it being grounded on the alledged testimonies of Scripture, the words of the institution, they give an uncontestable weight to the Catholic Doctrine.

THIS attestation of the priestly jurisdiction in the tribunal of confession, and the Father’s plain insinuation of their constant exercise of this jurisdiction, and of the sanction Heaven gave to it above, he saying, as we have just heard, “That the bond of loosing
“ sins reaches the soul, and even Heaven itself, in-
“ much

“ much that what the *Priests do below*, God ratifies “ *above* ;” this testimony, I say, is a full confutation also, of an objection some Protestants make to auricular confession, as an abuse crept into the Church, from a pretended abrogation of it by Nectarius Bishop of Constantinople, who was St. CHRYSOSTOM’s immediate predecessor. In order, however, to put this fact of Nectarius in it’s true light, it is necessary to premise that, besides the constant use and practice in the Church of Private Confession, it was judged by her necessary, in the middle of the third century, on the occasion of the rise of the Novatian Heresy, to ordain public confessions for notorious and public crimes. The reasons inducing the Church to enact this canon are too long to relate here: but so it was ordained, and for this purpose one particular Priest was selected out of the rest of the Clergy for every metropolitan Church, called the *Penitentiary*, to whom and to no one else it belonged to execute this office, of receiving and absolving public penitents. Such was the practice subsisting in the Church of Constantinople in Nectarius’s time, when on the occasion of a notorious indiscretion of the Penitentiary, and a great scandal brought thereby on the Church, he judged it convenient to suppress it. The fact was this. A matron of considerable note having had the misfortune to entertain a sinful commerce with a Deacon of the Church; repenting of her crime, and having recourse to the salutary remedy of confession for her cure, her Confessor unadvisedly enjoined her the shame of a Public Confession as an atonement for her guilt. This gave occasion to scandalous talk, and reflections on the Church and Clergy, and was judged by Nectarius a sufficient cause for abolishing the practice of Public Confessions thereafter; not forbidding thereby private confession, which till his time, and after his time, was perpetually kept up in the Church, pursuant to the intent of the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, and to the great benefit of the faithful, but barely suppressing Public

Confessions

Confessions, a practice occasionally introduced, and now occasionally abrogated. Socrates an Ecclesiastical historian of those times, speaking of the abolishment of this practice, represents it in this light, as of no prejudice to or precedent against private confession: What St. CHRYSOSTOM's sentiments were in this matter may be gathered from the extract from him above; and tho' he never repealed his predecessor's prohibition of Public Confessions, he perpetually recommends *private ones* to the faithful, as the only means of reconciliation to the Divine offended Justice; and particularly Hom. 30. in Genes. inculcates this penitential practice in the *Great Week*, as they called it, by us the *Holy Week*, as it had been done at the same times by Gregory Nyssen before. But after what has been already produced, I need not tire my reader with any more extracts from these venerable monuments of antiquity: — first, because, I say, these I have produced, connected with the scriptural proofs, I look upon to be conclusive: — secondly, because we have already heard LUTHER and his adherents strenuous abettors of this article; we have moreover heard two eminent Prelates of the Church of England declaring Confession to be a means of salvation of CHRIST's appointment, wishing it had been retained within the precincts of the Reformation, and imputing the omission to oversight rather than to any deliberate design. Dr. Montague, Bishop of Norwich, and several other Protestant Divines, chime in substance with the Prelates just mentioned, in asserting the institution and lawfulness of Confession, and avowing the advantage resulting from the use of it: and even those who affect to be sticklers against this doctrinal point act their part so weakly, and with such an ill grace, as to do no prejudice to the Catholic cause. The Church of England, in particular, in her order for the visitation of the sick, earnestly recommends to the infirm party a confession of his sins, and seems unwilling he should quit the world unprovided with this spiritual

shield of mercy, and salutary help towards making a happy end. "Then," says she, "shall the sick man be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter." Book of Com. Prayer.

IN consequence to the confession thus recommended, the minister is next directed to absolve him : the judicial power, usurped by the minister on this occasion, is the same as what is used by the Priests of the Catholic Church ; the form of absolution equivalently also the same. But how ridiculous and incoherent their conduct is in setting forth this ordinance, must be visible to every one ; since, if a reconciliation be eligible and requisite at any time, and there are means of CHRIST'S appointment for that purpose, the exigency and obligation of it hold in time of health as well as sickness ; or rather, in some degree, seems to bind stronger in the former circumstances ; because 'tis a presumption, as well as a folly, to put off so salutary, I should say so necessary a means of salvation to the last moments, when we may run a risk by such a delay, of being disabled at that critical hour to discharge a duty of so great importance.

BUT now, in order to frame a just idea of the nature of the Sacrament of Penance, of its great importance to mankind, and the infinite benefit accruing to him from it ; 'tis necessary we should recall to our mind the many fatal circumstances of our present unhappy state ; to look back on the source of our misfortune, on the difficulties it has thrown us under in the consequence, and the emergent occasion we have of a speedy and effectual relief : *to wit*, we are all of us sinners by inheritance, born slaves to Satan ; GOD'S sworn enemy and ours. All flesh, says Holy Scripture, is corrupted ; and though purged and washed in the laver of baptism, yet, as I observed above, some dregs and symptoms of the evil remain behind : the seed of sin is sown in us, and our inclination to it discovers itself with our first dawn of reason : we no
sooner

sooner begin to know what is evil, but we find a propensity to it; our understanding is blinded, our will perverted, and our memory filled with innumerable criminal ideas, which continually prompt us to what is offensive in the divine sight, and, in consequence to these innate corruptions interwoven into our nature, we effectually fall into daily and sundry kinds of sin.

THIS is a frightful, but, yet, true picture of human nature in its present state of forfeited justice: such was the deplorable condition of man when the Lord of Mercy appeared in his behalf, not only as his Mediator and Redeemer, but also as his Physician, prescribing for him a sovereign remedy to these epidemic evils, in the institution of the Sacrament of Penance. True it is, what I premised in the beginning of this chapter, that the infinite merits of an incarnate Deity were self-sufficient to cancel all our iniquities, and to discharge the debt in full; due to the divine justice, contracted by sin; and we might, no doubt, if God had pleased, have felt the immediate effects of this blessing, by a happy reconciliation, independantly of every other medium. This I say, was possible to Almighty God, but was not agreeable to the secret dispositions of his equitable providence. He had created man a free creature, and therefore his spontaneous concurrence with the divine mercies to save himself, was made a condition thereto, not to be dispensed with. "He that created you," says St. AUSTIN, "without you, will not save you without you." St. Aus. Conf. The Almighty, therefore, would not intrude his mercies upon us, but left it to our own liberty and option to appropriate them to ourselves, by laying hold on the means prescribed us by his divine providence: they were in themselves a source of living waters, overflowing and superabundant for all; but yet were to be conveyed to none but thro' the channels of God's appointment. These indeed, were different at different times.

BEFORE the mystery of the incarnation was accomplished, man's justification was annexed to the inward

motions of the heart, a stedfast faith in their future MESSIAH, an intense love of God, and a sincere sorrow for sin, exclusive of those singular advantages and extraordinary means of grace, we now possess: for it is since that happy event that CHRIST, as I observed above, has graciously vouchsafed to institute the Sacraments to be a continual commemoration, as well as an application to us of this great mystery of mercy, to the purpose and intent for which it was fulfilled, the cancelling of sin, and our happy reconciliation to the divine justice irritated by sin.

Now, the Sacrament of Penance is one of the more practical means of grace and mercy, than most of the rest, inasmuch as it is adapted to the special and extraordinary exigences of our corrupt state, capable of being repeated as often as we may have occasion for it by our unfortunate relapses into sin. We are conceived in original sin, which being washed away in the laver of baptism, it wants no more cleansing, and therefore we are only once baptised. Our actual sins are innumerable; we are daily falling into sundry crimes, and therefore have a free and repeated access to the remedy of them in the Sacrament of Penance, and may depend on receiving the benefit sought for, so often as we partake of it in the manner and dispositions required, "Have you sinned?" says St. CHRYSOSTOM, "repent: have you sinned a thousand times? repent a thousand times?"

THESE heartening exhortations to relapsing sinners, are grounded upon the solemn insurances of pardon from Almighty God himself, to sinners truly repenting, who by the Prophet EZEKIEL, declares that *He desires not the death of the sinner, but that he turn from his evil ways and live;* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. and by ISAIAH the Prophet, that at whatsoever time the sinner returns to him with a sincere repentance, *though his sins be as red as scarlet, he shall be made as white as driven snow.* Isai. i. 18. The like promises of mercy, made by our blessed Saviour in the New Testament, are innumerable;

ble; which for brevity's sake, they being known to every one, I forbear inserting here: to my present purpose it may be sufficient to observe, that his intent and design, in instituting the Sacrament of Penance, was to enable us thereby to attain, with more facility, the forgiveness he so graciously tenders to us, and this forgiveness we are sure can never fail to ensue from a right use of this Sacrament of Reconciliation, in the sincere dispositions of a contrite heart; and, therefore, who can be so foolish and blinded to his own interest as to reject so ineffable a blessing? who, laying under sentence of death, would not have recourse to the mercy of his judge, when it is attainable for asking for? what man, being mortally sick, would neglect to call for his physician, or make slight of his prescription, from which there is not only hopes but an assurance of a perfect cure? how unjust, therefore, are our late Reformers to themselves; how injurious to their divine Physician JESUS CHRIST; in not only rejecting, but in daring to contest the existence of a remedy so sovereign for all our spiritual infirmities, as is that, he has mercifully provided us with in the Sacrament of Penance? how still more unpardonable they, who with scornful flirts and railleries explode it as a priestcraft, and a mere human device; or misrepresent it as an encouragement to the evil, from which it is so effectual a relief?

Of this number is Dr. Tillotson, more disingenuous than ignorant, and therefore the less excusable, when he is not ashamed of charging upon us, as falsely as it is monstrous, that any degree of sorrow accompanied by the Priest's absolution is admitted by us to be sufficient and effectual to a full remission of our sins, howsoever grievous. Dr. Tillotson. Sermon. 11. From the notion of Penance thus falsely stated, he concludes it to be an encouragement to the most inveterate and habituated disorders, and that a man abandoned to his lusts, may give full loose to his passions upon this presumptuous security. Dr. Tillotson. Sermon. 11. Thus.
I say,

I say, the Doctor, according to the Protestant charitable custom, first misrepresents our doctrine, and then draws his own odious consequences from it. For, if he had consulted the true exposition of this Catholic tenet, set forth by the Council of Trent, which we profess to abide by; or rather, if he could have prevailed on himself to have declared the truth (which he could not be ignorant of) he should have informed his audience, that it is not *any degree of sorrow*, which the Catholic Church is content with, or allows to be sufficient for a sacramental absolution, but a sorrow which is supernatural, flowing from the love and fear of God, and positively excluding all actual affection to sin, including a detestation of past transgressions, and a firm purpose of amendment for the future; which sorrow is comprehensively, the perfectest sorrow, tho' susceptible of different degrees of intenseness, and divisible into several orders and qualities, termed *contrition* and *attrition*. And it is evident from the nature of the Sacrament of Penance, thus truly declared, that it must be productive of the afore said fruits, *Repentance* and *Amendment*: add to these essential ingredients, and indispensable conditions of a good and valid confession, the humiliation and confusion unavoidably accompanying it; which cannot fail to be operative of another double advantage to us, with respect to Almighty God and to ourselves; with respect, I say, to God, by being a means of pacifying his irritated justice.

For, if the Psalmist assures us that *he will not despise a contrite and humble heart*, Ps. l. 19. if he had proved the truth of it himself, when, for one *peccavi*, a sincere acknowledgment of his crime, he heard his forgiveness pronounced by the Prophet, and the guilt of his sin cancelled in Heaven; how much more will a similar humiliation, but made in obedience to CHRIST's own ordinance and appointment; an humiliation the most repugnant to nature, and shocking

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to flesh and blood, of laying open the naked state of our soul to one of our fellow creatures, be a means of obtaining the same mercy? It must needs, at the same time, prove of infinite service relatively to our own conduct, in being a check upon it, and a warning to us not to commit sin any more, when it is found to be pregnant with so much mischief, *viz.* either unavoidable shame from an humble and sincere confession, or certain perdition in the default of it. So that, in short, the Sacrament of Penance, considered in it's full extent respectively to all its constituent parts and essential conditions annexed to it, is so far from being an encouragement, in any degree to sin, or a means of emboldening the sinner to repeat his transgressions with more freedom (as Dr. Tillotson above, and others no less falsely than ridiculously object) that, on the contrary, it implies an absolute detestation of past misdeemeanours, a present remedy to the disorders already contracted, and a powerful antidote against a future relapse.

BUT while this charge can, with no colour of reason, be fastened on the Sacrament in question, it is certain, that in our present state of corruption, the want of these means of mercy, which is our adversaries case, as they have thereby no check or restraint on themselves against sin, and are not subject to the shame and confusion of an humble confession of it, when committed, directly lays them under the fatality they would make us liable to, of continuing in the state of sin, and of being exposed to a more evident risk of adding sin to sin, till they have filled up the measure of their sins; whereby, not being penitent according to the means prescribed by CHRIST, they come to die finally impenitent.

THUS our Reformers, in reforming away and discarding the Sacrament of Penance called *Confession*, have reformed away the most effectual help to salvation, and have shut the gates of mercy against themselves;

selves; and whether this has happened by oversight, (as the more moderate part of Protestants affect to palliate this act) or by design (as the barefaced impugnors of this Sacrament are not ashamed to say, maintaining a bad cause with a worse defence) it no ways redounds to the credit of their pretended Evangelical Work; but, on the contrary, is a visible mark of its being defective in this important point of faith and means of salvation; and thereby falls short also on this head, of the merits of their arrogated title.

HAVING closed my discussion of the present point, it may appear unnecessary to detain my reader any longer upon it: but since a learned and Reverend Prelate, lately, thought proper to attack in particular the Catholic Doctrine of *Repentance*, tho' what his Lordship opposes to it is no more than obsolete prejudices and misrepresentations already recited from Dr. Tillotson, and both now by us, and before by others often confuted; yet as they may be thought to carry some weight, from the bare authority of so Great a Man, taking it into his head to revive them, and, if passed by here unobserved, might, by the ignorant and unwary, be judged unanswerable: therefore, being engaged in the argument, charity calls upon us to disabuse them of their prepossessions: and our tenets, on this occasion, being so grossly misrepresented, we have a right to do justice to ourselves.

'Tis indeed a subject of astonishment, and not to be accounted for, that tho' the true and genuine Catholic doctrine of Repentance be to be met with in all our Catechisms, yet that our Protestant brethren, and even their teachers and the learned among them, should be ever so affectedly ignorant as to mistake it's meaning, or so unpardonably disingenuous, as to be perpetually and most shamefully misrepresenting it. This is the unfair dealing which we claim a right to complain of, from the Pastoral Letter of the Reverend
Bishop of Exeter,

Prelate, directed to the flock under his charge, and on such an occasion, when being prompted by extraordinary tokens from Heaven, of the divine wrath hanging over their heads, to exhort them to repentance for their sins; it was to be expected that nothing, but sincerity and truth, should have accompanied and given weight to those instructions.

THO' the letter is in every one's hands, yet I beg leave to give a place here to the particular paragraph relating to the point in question. "There is a great and grievous evil," says the Bishop, "among us, which naturally springs from the disorders before mentioned; I mean the great increase of Popery in this kingdom. When men have lost all principles of religion, and are lost to all sense of morality, they are prepared to receive any superstition, whenever the decay of health, or the cross accidents of life revive the fears of futurity, which may be stifled, but cannot be extinguished: such persons, not able to digest the wholesome food of repentance, by which their spiritual condition might be gradually mended, greedily swallow the high cordial of *Absolution*, which, like other cordials, gives some present ease, but works no cure. And, with respect to people of a serious and religious turn of mind, the manifest and almost general contempt, or at least neglect, of the duties of Religion, gives a great advantage to the emissaries of Rome to impose on their weakness, and to persuade them that they can have no hopes in the Religion of a Church, where Religion itself is hardly to be found."

GOOD GOD! How many disingenuous insinuations, and unfair misrepresentations, are here crowded into a few lines? What reasoning, I beg leave to say, wholly inconsequent and unworthy of the great Man it comes from? for, first, how little cause his Lordship has to complain of the growth of Popery, I appeal to noto-

riety of facts for it's confutation; *to wit*, to the defection of several Catholic families, which have gone over to them of late years. Whether, indeed, motives of liberty and interest had not a greater share in these changes than conscience, may be modestly questioned; and if so, the Protestant Church has little reason to boast of such proselytes. In the mean while, it being matter of fact that they have fallen off from us, it must be judged from thence that our strength is not increased, but considerably weakened.

WHAT his Lordship advances next, that a settled immorality “may stifle, but cannot extinguish the “fears of futurity”, (tho’ whether so or no, is not material to the Catholic cause) is however, I apprehend, also another mistake; for it is found by daily experience, and is evinced in many dreadful examples in Holy Writ, that an habitual and pertinacious abuse of God’s graces is usually punished with a subtraction of his special and extraordinary graces; and that a man’s wilfully shutting his eyes to the divine lights, renders him unworthy of these blessings, and in the consequence proves a means of depriving him of them, and of leading him gradually to obdurateness of heart and insensibility. It was the deplorable case of Pharaoh, and of several others, instanced in the inspired History. But that, on the other hand, when it may please the Father of light, thro’ his great and overflowing mercy and goodness, to *revive* in such prodigal children *the fears of futurity*, and to inspire them with a desire of returning to their duty, either by the favour of inward checks and remorse of conscience at the view of their unhappy state, *or by decay of health, or other cross accidents of life*; that these gracious admonitions of their deplorable condition and secret calls to repentance should, I say, prove a means (as his Lordship represents them) of preparing these unfortunate sinners *to receive any superstition*, is a paradox as unintelligible and shocking to pious ears, as it is
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in itself injurious to the dispositions of a merciful and bountiful Providence. For, to rise out of the pit of immorality, in order to plunge into the gulph of superstition, would be only *escaping out of Scylla*, as the saying is, to *fall into Charybdis*; that is, to exchange a less evil for a greater: and, to suppose this catastrophe to be the natural consequence of God's special and extraordinary providence (such as certainly are checks of conscience, salutary fears of God's judgments, and the rest) what is this less than to accuse Divine Providence itself of being defective?

BUT, again, with respect to people of a serious and religious turn of mind, that the evil examples of corruption and immorality, among the professors of their own Religion, should be a means of their forfeiting the faith they have been brought up in, and make room for those of a contrary persuasion to impose on *their weakness*, and to make profelytes of them to their belief, is another paradox his Lordship advances, irreconcilable to our idea of a divine and benign Providence, as well as to reason and common sense.

THE like examples, indeed, of Libertinism and corruption of manners, reigning among the members of another Religion, of whose principles we are ignorant, may, no doubt, be a means of either wholly alienating our minds from it, or of keeping us at a greater distance; but with respect to the Religion we have been educated in, and whose tenets of faith and discipline we are perfectly acquainted with, they cannot have the same influence upon us: in this case, such as do not live up to their profession may become to us an occasion of scandal, but cannot prejudice us against the Religion itself, unless, after mature examination, it be found to be destitute of that purity of doctrine and morals, fit to prevent such disorders, or is unprovided with helps and remedies to recover or reclaim those out of them, who have been unhappily engaged. And whether this be not really the case of the Reformation,

I appeal to every unbiaſſed judgment, from an impartial view of what has been hitherto, and will be hereafter offered to his conſideration thro' the courſe of this eſſay.

WHAT the Reverend Prelate further oppoſes directly to the article in queſtion, or rather ſcornfully flings at it, when he ſays, “ that ſuch perſons, (habituated
“ ſinners) not able to diſteſt the whoſom food of Re-
“ pentance, by which their ſpiritual condition might
“ be gradually mended, greedily ſwallow the high
“ cordial of Abſolution, which, like other cordials,
“ gives ſome preſent eaſe, but works no cure.” — This ſtroke, I ſay, ſeems to be more immediately calculated to fix his flock in their imbibed prepoſſeſſions againſt this article of the Catholic Faith, than to confute it; and, inſtead of clearing up the truth before their eyes, is throwing duſt into them to hide it from them. For, *what gradual means of repentance* would his Lordſhip preſcribe, which are not required by the Catholic Church as previous and neceſſary conditions to a *valid* Sacramental Abſolution? I ſuppoſe that a total converſion of the heart to God from ſin, an abjuration and deteſtation of paſt ſins, and a purpoſe of amendment for the future, are theſe means which he would, or ſhould, point out: and are not theſe alſo required by us as eſſential ingredients to a Sacramental Abſolution? Is not Abſolution looked upon by us to be invalid, or to no effect, without them? Are not there moreover other conditions, annexed to it, repugnant to fleſh and blood, which the indulgent Reformers have taken care to lay aſide? I mean an undisguiſed and humble manifeſtation of our ſins, and of the whole ſtate of our ſouls, to a Prieſt, to be followed by a ſatisfaction or a repentance, ſhewing itſelf in penitential works, to be unfeigned and effectual. Oh! how has the ſpirit of paſſion and prejudice tranſported this great and learned man beyond the bounds of truth, for the ſake
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of blackening us, and placing our cause in the most odious and disadvantageous light!

Under the pretext of cautioning his flock against an imaginary evil of suffering the *emissaries of Rome to impose on their weakness*, he *imposes* on our belief a monstrous doctrine no man in his senses ever taught, and no Catholic ever dreamt of; *to wit, a high cordial of Absolution*, qualified for vitiated consciences, and destitute of every ingredient to a true repentance! but, blessed be God, we disavow and abjure the ungenerous and disingenuous charge; and, as I said in the beginning, our common Catechisms, in every Catholic child's hands, are it's full confutation.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Invocation of Saints and Angels.

THE Catholic Church, that is, the Church in communion with the Church of Rome, is allowed, by our adversaries, to be in possession of the fundamental articles of faith, and all the necessary means to salvation; she is acknowledged to have the essential constitutives of the Church of CHRIST, and therefore, by deduction, must be confessed to be the original repository of the credentials and powers belonging to it; *viz. the Holy Scriptures, the Hierarchy, the Sacraments, and the rest.*

As large as these concessions may seem to be, and, in some degree, strained compliments, coming out of the mouths of enemies, it is no more than what the evidence of truth has extorted from them, and what they have been obliged to make for their own sakes, and in their own defence: for, as they derive their pretensions to the very being of a Church from the Roman Catholic Church, which they do not disown

to be the Mother of all other Christian Churches, or, at least, the Church from which they had their origin; to have disputed her the fundamentals and constitutives of a Church, would have been to unchurch her, and, in consequence thereto, to unchurch themselves: for, it is as inconceivable how they could receive a being from that which had none herself, that is, how they could be the true Church of CHRIST, springing from an idolatrous Church, as that the principles of the Gospel can be deduced from the Alcoran; or, that the Hierarchy, Sacraments, and other essentials of the law of Grace, should be conveyed to us thro' the channels of Mahometism.

In the mean while a plausible plea was to be thought of to justify their revolt from their Mother Church, and for setting up a separate communion. In order thereto the more moderate abettors of the Reformation have recourse to a middle expedient, which is, to charge her with introducing additions to the primitive faith: and it is in this, or the like manner, they explain their meaning. They pretend that at the time of, and long before, the Æra of the Reformation, the Church had fallen, as it were, into her dotage; in which state she had insensibly been raising an edifice of straw and stubble, clogged with superficial novelties and superstitions; so that, tho' her foundation continued sound, her superstructure was faulty.

BUT whatsoever stress our adversaries may affect to lay upon this plausible plea, on examining it strictly, we shall find that it has more of froth and empty conceit in it than solidity; for it must either prove too much, that is, more than they would mean and is for their purpose; so that in endeavouring to thrust out one of our eyes, they part with two of their own; or it will prove nothing at all. Because, if this supposed superstructure, or additions made to our faith, call 'em by what names they please, are *nonfundamental*, and they have no other charge to lay against their Mother Church; then, the epithets they fasten on her,
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on other occasions, of *Idolatrous* and *Antichristian*, are unjust; and their separation from her, on account of such supposed innovations, admitted to be immaterial, was groundless, and grievously criminal; because it is a sin of *Schism*, which is ranked by St. PAUL in the list of deadly sins, destructive of salvation: And therefore, if to get clear of this guilt, and our just re-
crimination upon them, they return to their charge of *fundamental* errors against their Mother Church, they, of course, as I have just shewn, must un-church her, and of consequence un-church themselves.

SUCH are the miserable shifts the Reformers are reduced to, in order to give some colour of justice to their revolt: such the various language, they talk at different times, to serve a turn, and the flat contradictions their rash attempt, of impeaching the Church of errors, throws them into.

HOWEVER, as they, in the course of this controversy subsisting between us, lead the way, we must be content to follow them all their lengths, doublings and windings, howsoever intricate and out of the road. This condescendance brings me at present to the consideration of the meaning of this *superstructure of faith*, (if it has any meaning at all) which they so loudly charge upon us.

FOR the sake of method and perspicuity I'll exemplify it, at present, in the particular article of the *Invocation of Saints and Angels*, at which some of the squeamish Reformers affect to be much scandalised: the most sanguine and violent of them express of it the greatest abhorrence and detestation; while, as we shall see by and by, the moderate, the candid, and many of the most learned of their body, look upon it as an article justifiable in itself, and warranted from the undeniable practice of antiquity.

SUCH are their divisions among themselves in this; as well as in most other points controverted between us, scarce unanimous or agreeing in any thing but their inflexible obstinacy in error, and their determined separation

paration from their Mother Church. But while their differences are a kind of negative evidence to the Catholic cause, loud clamours and vulgar prejudices are certainly no arguments against it. Reasons, convincing, undeniable reasons, can only be admitted in the present controverted point, to confront demonstrative proofs, backed by the prescription of practice immemorial.

THESE reasons, to carry any weight, ought, I apprehend, to be one or all of these three following: — first, the Divine prohibition of the invocation of Saints, clearly expressed in the Inspired Writings: — or, secondly, its being directly derogatory to the honour of Almighty God and the mediatorship of CHRIST: — or, lastly, that it is a devotion useless and unprofitable. But, if none of these reasons hold, and the contrary can be evinced from clear Scripture, primitive practice, and reason itself; then, it is to be hoped, the Saints may still keep possession of their charters, and their memories be as lawfully celebrated in our churches, and their aid invoked in our liturgies, as their names are retained in the calendar.

THIS is the justice which, in the following Section, I undertake to do these faithful, beloved servants of God, our assured friends and undoubted intercessors.

SECTION II.

The Veneration and Invocation of Saints justified by Scripture, the holy Fathers, and reason.

TO proceed with regularity and justice in any debate whatsoever, it is always requisite to set the state of the question in a fair and true light: without this necessary precaution we should be beating the air, or fighting in the dark, where friends and foes run an even risk of falling victims to the blows. Yet this is the folly, not to give it a worse name, our Reformers are guilty of in the present controversy, while, by misrepre-

misrepresenting our tenet, and impugning it in that false light, they do not properly attack us, but a phantom of their own brain and invention.

THE honour the Catholic Church pays to the Saints and Angels, is set forth by them under the notion of divine worship; the necessary consequence whereof is, that they must make us idolaters. Now, whether this is to be reputed a part of the *superstructure of our faith*, in their modish way of expressing it, when they are disposed to be the most merciful to us; or whether it be to be called a *fundamental error*, (and certainly idolatry can hardly come under a softer denomination) the charge, as coming from the learnedest part of the Reformation is inexcusable, because they know it to be unjust; whatsoever may be said to extenuate the rashness of the vulgar, in taking up their prejudices without examination, on the word and credit of their teachers. However, if our cause be to be tried by this test, *viz.* by what the vulgar think and their teachers say of us; and our belief is to be understood according to their exposition of it; our condition would certainly be desperate: but we hope to be allowed the privilege granted to the greatest malefactors, not to be condemned unheard. We hope, moreover, it will be reasonably supposed that we know ourselves what we do believe, and what we do not believe.

THESE just *postulatus* being admitted, we, first, absolutely disavow the doctrine our adversaries would father upon us: that is, we renounce and abjure all *divine Worship* to any Creature whatsoever; and whereas the Church herself is the natural and fittest expositor of her own *Faith*, and as she has declared it in the present point in debate, by her representatives in the Council of Trent, to this we appeal, and by this we profess to abide. Her exposition of this article is as follows; “ That the Saints, who reign with
“ JESUS CHRIST, offer up their prayers to God for
“ men; that it is good and profitable to invoke
“ them after an humble manner, and to have recourse

“ to their prayers, aid and a assistance, to obtain of
 “ God his benefits through our Lord JESUS CHRIST
 “ his Son.” Conc. Trid. Sefs. 25. This is the genuine belief of the Church in this matter; how different alas! from the unfair and malignant exposition of our adversaries! in this sense we doubt not, with God’s assistance to be able to maintain it against their cavils and slanders, by uncontestable warrants from Scripture, primitive practice and reason.

THE first evidence, I shall produce, is out of the Apostles Creed, which, though not literally a part of the written word of God, yet has the sanction of Apostolic tradition, and has been adopted by the generality of Christian sectaries of most denominations in every age: and is, by the way, an irrefragable instance that every thing appertaining to faith is not expressly contained in the written Scriptures. Now in the ninth article of this Apostolic symbol of faith, as every child knows, we assert and avow the *communion of Saints*: the obvious and genuine meaning whereof we apprehend to be, that there is a communication betwixt CHRIST’S Church militant on earth, and his Church triumphant in Heaven; that the said communication consists in this, *viz.* that while the Saints in Heaven are enjoying the reward of their labours and glorious combats, for their courageous profession and defence of truth here below, they, like MOSES, who lifted up his hands in prayer, for the Israelites fighting the battles of the Lord, are offering up their vows and prayers before the throne of mercy in behalf of their brethren on earth, actually engaged in the field of battle, and in the like combats, in which they came off so happily victorious. And if it be reasonable to believe, as no doubt it is, that these blessed inhabitants of Heaven can and do remember their brethren on earth; if their charity which, as St. PAUL assures us, in that state of bliss never ceases, inclines them to do these good offices for us; where can be the incongruity, unreasonableness, much

much less the unlawfulness of our requesting this charity of them.

THIS then, is what we apprehend to be the simplest and most genuine meaning of this article of our symbol, *the communion of Saints*; this the friendly intercourse subsisting between the Saints and us: we communicating with them by supplicating their interest and intercession in our behalf, to the throne of Mercy: they reciprocally communicating with us, by indulging us the benevolence requested of them: one is a consequence of the other. "The Saints can, and are willing to pray or intercede for us; therefore we may lawfully desire their intercession and prayers."

THOUGH the explanation I have given of this article of the Creed, I presume to think quite easy and natural, yet we dare not flatter ourselves that we can clear up any point to such a degree of perspicuity, as to obtain our adversaries implicit assent to it, upon our own bare word. While they are disposed to misrepresent our interpretations as arbitrary, though never so plain, and right or wrong to impugn them, it renders it necessary for us to look out for other corroborative evidences. It is our good fortune on the present subject to have one, to which they can make no exception, as to the testimony itself, it being one of their own most creditable and eminent writers. The testimony I mean is the learned Mr. Thorndike, who in his just weight and measures, respectively to the articles of the Creed, I have just discussed, not only agrees with us in his sense of it, but also in the foundation on which it rests. His own words will be the best expositor of his sentiments, which are as follow: "All members," says he, "of the Church triumphant in Heaven, according to their degree of favour with God, abound also with love to his Church militant on earth: therefore, it is certain, both that they offer continual prayers to God for its necessities, and that their prayers must be of great force

“ and effect with God for the assistance of the Church
 “ militant in this warfare; which, if it be true, the
 “ communion of Saints will necessarily require, that
 “ the living beg of God a part and interest in those
 “ prayers, which they, who are near to God in his
 “ kingdom, tender to him without ceasing for the
 “ Church upon earth,” c. 16. p. 107. Thus this Protestant author, whose testimony gives at least so much weight to our interpretation as to prove it not to be arbitrary. I shall have an opportunity of producing additional evidences from other eminent Protestants, by and by.

IT is at present incumbent on me, to shew clear Scripture for the antecedent and consequence of the position just advanced, viz. that the Saints do pray for us, and that therefore it is lawful for us to solicit their prayers. Out of an abundance of these sacred vouchers which for brevity's sake I pass over, the few following I apprehend to be incontestable—that the Saints and Angels incessantly pray for us, is evinced from the following extracts.

THE Angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of Hosts! how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years. *Zahd. i. 12.* The four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints. *Rev. v. 8.* And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer; and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the Throne—and the smoke of the Incense, with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angels hand. *Rev. viii. 3, 4.*

THE Angel RAPHAEL, discovering himself to TOBY, and giving him to understand how acceptable his prayers and works of mercy were at the throne of God, said to him, *When you poured forth your prayers in tears,*
and

and buried the dead.—I presented your prayer to the Lord, Toby xii. Now, that it is lawful to request their prayers, is, as I observed, but a consequence of their praying for us, but is, however, further enforced from the two following texts out of many, which I omit.

God, before whom my fathers ABRAHAM and ISAAC did walk; the GOD which fed me all my life long until this day; the Angel, which redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. Grace be unto you, and peace, from which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the Seven Spirits which are before his throne, Rev. i. 4.

To these Scripture proofs I'll subjoin one from reason itself, the natural result of every one's unprejudiced judgment and impartial reflections on this subject. St. PAUL made no difficulty of requesting the prayers of his living friends: it was his constant practice, through all his epistles. The members of the Reformation, as well as the Catholic Church, copy after this great Apostle's example, and have adopted his practice into a general custom. Now I'll only ask one plain question. Can it be less lawful to address our friends for their intercession in our behalf when they are in the state of bliss, where their charity is more perfect, their interest with Almighty God supposed to be greater, and consequently our presumption of success better grounded, than to solicit this same charity from them while they are in the state of mortality, weak and infirm vessels like ourselves, and subject to all our corruptions? Or could there have been any more incongruity in St. PAUL's requesting the prayers of his congregation, had they been in Heaven, than while they were cohabitants with him in this earthly mansion? To aver this incongruity is ridiculous; and therefore the negative must be certain.

I CONCLUDE, from the whole, that the Invocation of Saints is so far from being illicit, or forbid by any
divine

divine ordinance, that, on the contrary, it has the sanction of the Creed, is seconded by reason, and is warranted by undoubted records of Scripture, to render it lawful and even highly commendable. Therefore our adversaries impeachment of it upon this first plea, of it's being unlawful, may be judged, from the premises, to have evidently failed: and we apprehend that their second exception to it, for being derogatory to the Divine honour, and injurious to the mediatorship of CHRIST, is not better grounded.

THIS truth is, in fact, but another sequel from the foregoing premises: for, if the Invocation of Saints were really inseparable from these dreadful consequences, 'tis inconceivable how it should not come within the list of the divine prohibitions; but from what has been already alleged, and shall be further produced presently, it is certain there are no such prohibitions; that is, no divine ordinance forbidding it: it is also certain, from the premises, that there are many plain and positive texts asserting its lawfulness, and recommending its practice: therefore the conclusion flowing from these said premises is equally certain that such a practice cannot be liable to the censure our adversaries would fasten upon it, of being any diminution of the honour due to God, or derogatory to the mediatorship of CHRIST.

BUT the very nature of the thing, stating the case in the Catholic sense, not as misrepresented by the Reformers, puts the matter beyond all dispute: for, if the respect given to the Saints is to be interpreted an encroachment on the divine prerogative, it must be such, either as it is an honour and veneration paid to their memories, or as it is a supplication to them for their intercession and interest. But it is not so considered in the first light, because all we profess thereby is only to glorify Almighty God in his Saints, as we glorify him in all his works, and as the three Children in the Babylonian furnace (Dan. iii.) summon all creatures,

creatures, spiritual and corporal, rational and irrational, and even the inanimate part of the creation, to declare the praises of their Maker. For, how much more congruous is it to glorify him in the wonderful operations of his Grace? especially since he has signified to us, by the mouth of the Royal Psalmist, that in these he takes the greatest complacency, and would be chiefly admired: *Wonderful*, says he, *is God in his Saints!* And therefore all the praises we attempt to give to these servants of God, whatsoever respect we presume to pay to their memories, are ultimately referred to God himself, as to the Author, Cause, and Rewarder of their merit, and are centred in him.

BUT is it not said in Holy Writ — *My glory I will not give to another*, Isa. xiii. 8. and, in another place, *GOD you shall only adore, and him alone shall you serve?* Luke iv. 8. It is so, and the precept we fulfill to the letter, in adoring God alone with divine worship; respecting the Saints only as his approved servants and bosom friends, and terminating, as I just said, all the honour we attribute to them, in Almighty God. Had we espoused the phantom our adversaries would father upon us, the charge against us would be just, and our devotions to the Saints damnable: as, on the contrary, we disavow and execrate it, we are consequently out of the reach of this odious indictment.

BUT, to the second part of the objection — are not, say they, our addresses to them, at least, blameable; in begging an aid and assistance which we should expect at the hands of God alone? Much less: for, in this we do not solicit or respect the Saints as authors of Grace, or bestowers even of any temporal blessing we may be in want of, but barely as Intercessors for us to the Throne of Mercy.

THIS answer is an implicit and sufficient solution to another trivial objection levelled at the same mark, and grounded on the form of Prayer prescribed and left us by our blessed Saviour JESUS CHRIST, which

is addressed to the Eternal Father alone, *Our Father who art in Heaven*, &c. and which they are pleased to suppose that we abandon, by making a round-about supplication to the Saints. But to this charge we also plead Not Guilty. The Catholic Church professes the profoundest reverence for, and singular attachment to this Divine Prayer: she makes use of it continually; and the first lesson children are taught, as soon as they are able in any degree to form their tongues to words, is to lip the Lord's Prayer. But, as our blessed Saviour, in giving us this particular form of Prayer, personally directed to his Eternal Father, has not thereby forbid any other distinct addresses to the Two other Divine Persons, which the Reformed Churches occasionally make use of as well as we; so the Catholic Church judges, very justly, that there is as little reason for interpreting it a forbiddance of a well-ordered application to the Saints, as his approved friends and servants, and our powerful Intercessors.

FROM the first to the last it is evident that the Invocation of Saints can in no respect be looked upon as an encroachment on, or a diminution of the Divine honour; and therefore this material part of our adversaries exception against it failing, the other, importing it to be injurious to CHRIST's mediatorship, must, of course, share the same fate. As a further confutation thereof, I'll only add one single reflection: CHRIST is, no doubt, our sole *Mediator of Redemption*: the Catholic Church ever thankfully acknowledges him as such; but still looks upon this prerogative of CHRIST as no exclusion of the Saints tenure and privilege, so often repeated and strongly supported, of being our *Mediators of Intercession*: and as a corroborative proof that she addresses them in this lower capacity, the personal supplication made to them is directed to *God the Father, thro' the Son, in union with the Holy Ghost*. This is the express clause of all the Prayers of the Catholic Church. And thence we
justly

justly infer, that our addresses to the Saints in this manner and form, as *bare Intercessors*, can be no more incongruous in itself, nor derogatory to the Divine worship, or injurious to CHRIST, than our request would be of the like intercession, or *mediatorship*, if I may so call it, of our friends and companions here on earth; of whose favour and interest with Almighty God, we cannot have the same certainty which we have of the Saints united to him by the indissoluble band of everlasting love and friendship.

AND yet how agreeable to Almighty God is the intercession even of his servants here on earth: how prevalent with his Divine Mercy, and fruitful of success, we have numerous proofs out of the sacred Writings. Almost every line of a considerable part of the *Pentateuch* furnishes us with instances of the ascendant interest MOSES, the great leader of the Israelites, had in Heaven; and of the astonishing efficacy of his prayers; sometimes by working the most amazing wonders, in behalf of that People, and of drawing down showers of blessings upon them: at other times by appeasing the Divine Wrath, provoked against them by their monstrous infidelity, and averting the sword of justice hanging over their heads. So prevalent was also the interest of the great servant of GOD, SAMUEL; so irresistible, as it were, his supplications to the Almighty, that He seemingly complained of their tying his hands, and obstructing the execution of his determined resentment against the unhappy, unfaithful SAUL. *How long, says he, will you lament Saul, when I have cast him off from being any longer a Ruler over my people of Israel?* Lib. i. Reg. c. xvi. v. i.

I CANNOT omit one particular instance, where the intercession of the just man is not only declared to be acceptable, but is even recommended and enjoined the delinquents, by God himself, as the only effectual

means of forgiveness. It was in the case of the friends of JOB, whose rash and presumptuous discourses had irritated Almighty God to such a degree, that he would not be pacified upon any other terms than thro' the mediation of his faithful servant JOB. *The Lord said to Eliphaz the Themanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath: therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering, and my servant Job shall pray for you; for, him I will accept, lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my servant Job.* Job xlii. 7, 8.

Now, according to the dictates of human reason, the means of obtaining forgiveness should be adapted to the nature of the offence: but the offence, on this occasion, was a direct insult offered to the Deity, by rashly canvassing the dispensations of his Divine Providence, and therefore the atonement adequate to the crime, one would think, should have been self-humiliation, sacrifice, and supplication of pardon, coming directly from the offenders; yet all these are declared unacceptable and ineffectual, but as seconded by the the intercession of his just and faithful servant. *Job shall pray for you,* says Almighty God, *and him will I accept.* Therefore it is evident from this, and numerous other instances, that the soliciting the intercession of the Just in our behalf is in itself no ways injurious to God, nor derogatory to his honour, and is frequently most conducive towards obtaining the desired effect.

BUT now, can the alteration of their circumstances, from the state of mortality to the state of immortality and glory, be a means of lessening their interest? Or shall we even make no difficulty of relying on the prayers of our earthly friends, and look on a request of the intercession of the Saints as *useless and unprofitable?*

ble? this is a paradox irreconcilable to reason and common sense; and yet it is our adversaries last shift, their third and principal plea, in support of the present opposition, and so insufficient that, I apprehend, a simple view of its weak grounds will be its best confutation.

THESE grounds must apparently consist of one or all of these following mistaken reasons; *to wit*—first, that the Saints are deaf to our petitions, and regardless of our indigences—secondly, that they are unable to relieve them; or,—thirdly, and lastly, that they are ignorant of them.

THE first of these allegations offers violence to the Saints characteristic quality, inherent to them in their present state of bliss, their eminent Charity, which, as I observed from St. PAUL before, *never ceases*; 1 Cor. xiii. 8. and in Heaven is perfected: and therefore this objection, so injurious to the Saints honour, confutes itself. in a word, it is certain that they love us most intensely; that they are intimately concerned for our welfare, and are desirous and ready to be aiding towards it.

THE second objection is a direct contradiction to the numerous testimonies already produced, of their undoubted interest at the throne of mercy; and therefore wants no further answer.

THE third objection is trifling and ridiculous in itself, and may be equally disproved from similar undeniable evidences out of the inspired writings. For instance, CHRIST tells us, *That there is joy in the presence of the Angels of GOD over one sinner that repents*; Luke xv. 10. which is inconceivable, unless they are made privy to what is transacting by us here below, and interest themselves in our well-doing. The same is evident from what St. PAUL says, *That we are made a spectacle to the world, to the Angels, and to men*. 1 Cor. iv. 9.

AGAIN, it is certain that though our great Creator, having by his Almighty Word drawn us out of our

original nothing into the state of existence, could, if he had a mind, by his immediate influence and his same omnipotent power, have conducted us through every circumstance of our being, independently of any other medium; yet he has been pleased to make use of administering spirits, the Angels, to guard, protect and direct us in all our paths; therefore I apprehend this to be a token, first, that Almighty God requires of us to repose a trust and confidence in these guardians and protectors of our being; to behave ourselves with respect and reverence in their presence; to have recourse to them in all our difficulties and dangers, both corporal and spiritual, and to be thankful to them for our preservation in these critical moments. It follows secondly, from this same consideration, that whereas these blessed Spirits must, without all doubt, be intimately acquainted with all that passes within and without us, they can certainly make known our wants and petitions to their associate partners in glory, so often as we may have further recourse to them for their concurrent intercession and aid. In fine, if our exigences and requests, conveyed through these channels, that is, by the means of the Saints, to the throne of mercy, are thus acceptable, as has been proved they are, cannot Almighty God in his omniscient wisdom, by means unnecessary for us to dive into, impart our wants and applications to them, to whom they are directed? the Apostle plainly insinuates this, when he says *That in Heaven the Saints know things even as they are known*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. that is in God, as in a mirror in which all things appear as they are. In short, this truth is so self-evident and conspicuous, that a man must shut his eyes not to see it, or have the front to deny first principles, and to withstand demonstration itself, not to submit to it.

THE same degree of evidence, I presume to think, accompanies every proof before alleged, of this Catholic tenet, and consequently overturns their vain opposition to it. At least I dare be positive that it appeared

appeared in this light to the whole world, and was the universal belief of the Church till the trade of Re-forming came into fashion; and that the plainest truths being reformed away, one after another, the Saints, with the Mother Church which espoused their cause, were sent adrift, and dispossessed of their tenure, which they had held from the foundation of Christianity. Till these late times of confusion, I say, the honour and veneration due to the Saints and Angels was an article never doubted of, and their invocation the general practice; insomuch that I dare challenge our adversaries to produce one authority in the primitive ages of the Church, of not a convicted or a reputed Heretic against it; while we have a cloud of these venerable witnesses of antiquity to bring forth in its defence. Out of this great number of them, for brevity's sake, I'll only quote one or two, whose authority is indisputable, and their sentiments express and plain, and therefore to be deemed the sentiments and belief of the whole orthodox Body of the Church.

St. GREGORY NYSSEN addresses himself to St. THEODORE, Martyr, thus—"Intercede for your country
" with our common Lord and King.—as a soldier
" fight for us, as a Martyr use the liberty of speaking
" in behalf of your fellow servants——If there be
" necessity of greater supplications, compel the choir
" of your brethren martyrs, and with them all pray
" ——Admonish PETER, excite PAUL and also JOHN,
" the divine and beloved Disciple, that they would
" be solicitous for the Churches they have planted."
Orat. de St. Theod. T. 3. p. 585.

St. CHRYSOSTOM in his sermon upon the holy martyrs, DOMNINA, BERENICE, and PROSDOSCE, thus exhorts his people: "Let us go to their tombs, not
" only on the day of their feasts, but upon other days
" also. Let us beseech them, let us beg of them to
" be our protectresses; for their power is great, not
" only when living, but also, and much more when
" dead. For now they bear the marks of CHRIST,
and

“ and when they shew these, they may obtain all things from the King.” St. Chryl. T. 1. p. 62. 51.

THE same Saint, when Bishop of Constantinople, in a public Sermon delivers himself to his congregation as follows: “ He that wears purple, comes to those tombs (of the Saints) to kiss them; and casting off his pride, stands humbly, *invoking the Saints*, that they may defend him at the tribunal of God. And that the Tent-maker and Fisherman, tho’ dead, may be his patrons, is the earnest request of him, that wears the diadem. Tell me then; dare you say the Lord is dead, whose servants, tho’ deceased, are patrons and defenders to those, who have all the earth under their command?” St. Chryl. Hom. 26. in Epist. 2. ad Corinth.

ST. AMBROSE asserts, positively, the lawfulness of the Invocation of Saints, in the following words: — “ Our Angel Guardians are to be invoked — the Martyrs are to be invoked, whose patronage we seem to have a claim to, by possessing their relics. *They have power to ask pardon for our sins, &c.* Let us not be ashamed *to make use of them as Intercessors for our infirmity*, who knew the weakness of the body at the same time that they conquered it.” St. Ambr. l. de Vid.

ST. AUSTIN says, “ that we do not name the Martyrs at the holy table, as we do others who rest in peace, so as to pray for Martyrs; but rather that they may pray for us, &c.” St. Aug. Tract. 74. in John. In another place he says, “ ’Tis the practice of the Church, which the faithful know, that when the Martyrs are named at the Altar, we pray not for them, tho’ *we pray for the other souls departed*, whom we name. For it is an injury to a Martyr to pray for him *to whose prayers we ought to commend ourselves.*” St. Aug. Serm. 159. de Verb. Apost.

AND to omit the many addresses, this holy and learned Doctor made from time to time to the Saints
and

and Angels, to be gathered out of his pious writings, he in his book of Meditations recommends himself to the whole Court of Heaven in the following emphatic aspirations : “ Holy and Immaculate Virgin, Mother
“ of GOD, Mother of our Lord JESUS CHRIST,
“ vouchsafe to intercede for me to Him in Heaven,
“ whose living temple you was made worthy to be
“ on earth ! — St. MICHAEL, St. GABRIEL, all ye
“ choirs of Angels, Archangels, Patriarchs, Prophets,
“ Apostles, Martyrs, and Confessors, all ye holy
“ Monks and just Souls ! I conjure you thro’ him,
“ who chose you and called you to the happiness you
“ now possess, that you’ll pray to GOD for me a sin-
“ ner to deliver me from the jaws of Satan and eter-
“ nal death.” St. Aust. Meditat. c. 40.

To these venerable monuments of antiquity I might subjoin ORIGEN, THEODORET, and others of less note ; tho’ as they spoke the language of the Church in their times, and were never censured for their opinions on this head, they must be reputed orthodox. I might add, that the innumerable Homilies and Sermons extant, of almost every holy Father, on the the Saints Festivals, are so many vouchers to the legality of honouring and invoking them.

I’LL conclude these venerable testimonies with St. JEROME’S answer to VIGILANTIUS, an Heretic of his own time, and reputed such by him in the point in question. “ If the Apostles,” says he, “ and Mar-
“ tyrs, prayed for others in this world (when they
“ were in concern for themselves) how much more
“ after their crowns, victories, and triumphs ? Mo-
“ ses obtained pardon for six hundred thousand men
“ — STEPHEN begged pardon for his persecutors ;
“ and since they are with CHRIST will they have less
“ power ?” St. Hier. Lib. cont. Vigilant. It is to be observed from this short extract from St. JEROME, that his Vindication of the honour and Invocation of the Saints, against his cotemporary antagonist, literally coincides

coincides with our foregoing proof of the Catholic doctrine against our modern Reformers, and rests on the same foundation. The frank declaration of some of the most candid of our adversaries, who could not refrain subscribing to this truth so creditably attested, shall supply the omission of the rest of these venerable authorities. Mr. Thorndike's judgment on this subject I have quoted, at length, above. He further confesses, that "the lights both of the Greek and Latin Churches — BASIL, NAZIENZEN, NYSSEN, AMBROSE, JEROME, AUSTIN, CHRYSOSTOM, both CYRILS, THEODORET, FULGENTIUS, St. GREGORY the Great, LEO — More, or rather All, after that time, have spoken to the Saints, and desired their assistance." Thorn. Epil. part. 3. p. 358.

IN another place he says, "that to dispute whether we are bound to honour the Saints or not, were to dispute whether we are to be Christians — and, whether this be *religious* or *civil*, nothing but the equivocation of words makes disputable; and the cause of that equivocation the want of words." Ibid. p. 353.

DR. MONTAGUE, Bishop of Norwich's declaration of his opinion in this point is expressive and entirely Catholic: "I grant," says he, "CHRIST is not wronged in his Mediation; it is no impiety to say as they (the Roman Catholics) do — *Holy Mary, pray for me; holy Peter, pray for me.*"

AND again, "I see no absurdity in nature, no incongruity unto analogy of faith, no repugnance at all to sacred Scripture; much less impiety, for any man to say *Holy Angel Guardian pray for me.*" Tract. *Invoc. of Saints*, p. 118.

AND the Bishop of Oxford, in his edition of St. CYPRIAN, says, "We do not doubt but the souls in Heaven pray earnestly to God that he may shew his mercy to those that live here." Ibid. p. 271.

FROM these large concessions, coming out of the mouths of Protestants now cited, to omit many others, I beg leave to draw this obvious conclusion, *viz.* that the force of truth must be great indeed, when it has obliged our enemies to subscribe to it. And in the mean while, their frank confession is sufficient to give shame to the rest of their brethren, who still perversely stand out against the same evidence and conviction; whilst it, at the same time, sinks the credit of the Reformation in general, which amongst the rest of it's temerarious proceedings, and manifest inconsistencies, is guilty of robbing the Saints and Angels of an honour undoubtedly their due; and is injurious to its own members, by depriving them of the benefit of so powerful and effectual a patronage.

C H A P. VI.

The Honour of the Blessed Virgin MARY asserted, and an extraordinary Veneration proved to be due to her.

WHATSOEVER honour is admitted to be lawfully given to the Saints and Angels, as servants and friends of God, must, by parity of reason, be allowed in an eminent degree to be the Blessed Virgin MARY's unquestionable right, as Mother of God, and the Queen of all Saints. On this foundation the Catholic Church has always professed a distinguished and extraordinary devotion to this cherished Favourite of Heaven, which it is far from me, or any true son of the Church, to dissemble. On the other hand, the authors and abettors of the Reformation, as much to their shame, have been as active and industrious in depreciating her memory. 'Tis true they gloss over this particular conduct as they have done their whole pretended Reform, with the usual cant of impeaching our excesses and abuses; and both one and the other,

as we shall see presently, without the least colour of justice or reason.

WHAT has been already urged in the foregoing chapter, in defence of the honour given to the Saints, and the Invocation of them, may be reputed an implicit vindication of the Blessed Virgin's cause. But while our adversaries affect such a distinguished spleen against the Queen of Heaven (under whatsoever cloak they endeavour to disguise it) it behoves every Catholic to appear, at least, equally zealous in her defence. This consideration has induced me to employ a separate chapter on this subject, and apologizes for the rashness of my undertaking, in becoming an advocate in a cause which wants none at all, or deserves one better qualified for the task, than I dare flatter myself to be.

It happens in this debate, no less than in those which have gone before, to be prerequisite to place the state of the question in a true light, in order to be able to proceed in the discussion of it with any regularity, perspicuity, and justice; and as a necessary precaution against the cavils of our adversaries, generally running on groundless suppositions, or wilful misrepresentations. The following notes I propose to answer this purpose.

NOT. 1. In whatsoever degree of pre-eminence the Church considers the Blessed Virgin, as placed above the other Saints and Angels, she still looks upon her no more than as a pure Creature, and consequently at an infinite distance from Almighty God, and also from the Word Incarnate JESUS CHRIST; who, tho' according to his human nature he be a Creature, yet in virtue of the *hypostatical union* subsisting under the *Divine Personality*, is God as well as Man, and therefore not a Creature merely such.

NOT. 2. As all acts of Religion are qualified by the objects in which they are terminated, and the intention directing them, we declare that all those which are referred to the Blessed Virgin, whether by way of honour,

honour, or of supplication, to be specifically distinct from what are made to the Blessed Trinity, or to JESUS CHRIST; to wit, that they are infinitely wide of divine worship. And, whereas words, and even actions, are *signa ad placitum*, that is, arbitrary signs, determined to their meaning by our will and pleasure, or by general usage; we therefore further protest that any words made use of in our devotions to the Blessed Virgin, which may be liable to an equivocal sense, to be understood and meant by us, according to the restrictions herein expressed.

NOT. 3. All addressees, of every sort, made to the Blessed Virgin are, *in genere*, that is, in kind, and their own nature, the same as those made to the other Saints and Angels; to wit, as barely to an intercessor for us to God, and not as the author or bestower of any gifts, either spiritual or temporal.

THIS is the true tendency of the honour we give the Blessed Virgin: this the genuine belief and sense of the Catholic Church in this point; though I am sensible 'tis not what the ignorant part of our adversaries mistake it, or what the learned Body of them unfairly misrepresent it. But be this as it will, their calumnies can neither affect us, nor our cause. The Catholic tenets, are what it is incumbent on us to defend, not their misrepresentations of them: therefore, consequently to these notes, what I undertake to prove in the present debate, is,

FIRST—That the superior prerogatives and privileges, the Blessed Virgin is possessed of, being clearly expressed in Scripture, entitle her to a superior and distinctive degree of honour, from what is given to any other Creature; but still, as I said above, *in eodem genere*; that is, as to a pure creature.

SECONDLY—That these prerogatives justify the distinguished devotion and extraordinary veneration which the Catholic Church, within the limitations and restrictions aforesaid, pays to her memory; and more—

over, render the Trust she reposes in her intercession entirely rational, prudential, and regular.

To make good these assertions is the subject of the two following Sections,

SECTION I.

The Blessed Virgin MARY has undoubtedly been privileged by Heaven with extraordinary prerogatives, clearly expressed in Scripture, which entitle her to extraordinary honours.

THE seeming reservedness of the inspired Penmen in their commemoration of the Blessed Virgin, her name but seldom occurring in the course of their writings, has been one handle her adversaries fondly lay hold of to depreciate her memory; namely, Mr. Lesley, in his *Case Stated*, displays the whole strength of his eloquence, to give weight to this groundless exception to the Blessed Virgin's honour; which, when they have made the most of, amounts to no more than a bare negative: and even in this light, how little to the purpose, will be apparent to every one, who impartially considers the drift and several designs of these sacred Records. Each one, 'tis well known, has his respective theme, in which the Blessed Virgin was no ways concerned; for instance, the business of the Evangelists was to assert the Divinity of their Blessed Master: to prove him to have been the MESSIAH, so often promised to, and long expected by the Jews, the Saviour of the world; and to give the history of his *Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Death and Resurrection*, which ascertained to us his divine prerogative, above all doubt or contradiction.

THE drift of the Epistles was to recapitulate and confirm the Gospel Truths, and to give us a system of Christian Morality.

THE ACTS of the Apostles consist of two principal designs or divisions — the first setting forth the Apostles confirmation in Grace by the mysterions descent of the Holy Ghost, and their installation and entrance on their ministry, with other incidents thereto relating — the second is a professed history of St. PAUL, his miraculous conversion, his extraordinary call to the Apostleship, and his faithful discharge of his trust, by which he became so instrumental to the establishment and propagation of the infant Church of CHRIST.

Now the Blessed Virgin, as has been said, and must be obvious to every one, being entirely unconcerned in the related several designs of these sacred Records; a digression to her from them would have been as impertinent, as it would be, to thrust in a narration of the achievements of Alexander the Great, into the Annals of Great Britain.

IN that part of the Evangelical story where we are informed of the accomplishment of the mystery of the Incarnation, to which, by the will and decree of Almighty God, the Blessed Virgin was so materially instrumental; she is mentioned in so ample and honourable a manner, as to give us the most exalted idea of her sublime privileges and prerogatives, and to lay the foundation of all that honour, respect and reverence becoming due to her, that can possibly be given to any pure creature: which made St. EPIPHANIUS say that above all creatures, the Blessed Virgin was the most worthy of the respect of both men and Angels. St. Ephip. de laud. Virginis.

THESE prerogatives are of two sorts; the first *radical*, the other *accessory*: the first clearly and positively expressed in the sacred Writings: the others partly expressed, partly insinuated; and, from our own sense and reason, to be adjudged absolutely subsequent to the former.

HER prerogative of the first kind is what must immediately occur to every one who sets any estimate upon

upon the benefit of his Redemption; viz. her election to the Maternity; that is, her being chosen to be Mother of a God made Man. This instantly imprints on our mind such an elevated idea of her dignity, that the great Light and Doctor of the Church, St. AUSTIN, declares he wanted words to express it: — “With what praises,” says he, “to extol you, Oh! sacred Virgin, I know not; since you have been deemed worthy to bear in your womb, whom the Heavens are unable to contain.” St. Aug. Serm. de Annunciat.

IN effect, to frame a true judgment of the dignity of the Mother, it is necessary to dive into the incomprehensible attributes and intrinsic worth of the Son; and therefore, in this respect, that is, *relatively* speaking, St. THOMAS of Aquin does not stick to say that the dignity, the Blessed Virgin was raised to, on this occasion, was the extent of the Divine Power; because, as the Son was superior to every one else, so his Mother, as such, was without her equal. For, if even, according to worldly estimation; advantages of birth, fortune, and antiquity of family, which are merits purely relative, bespeak respect: if the meanest creature imaginable, being raised to the honour of a partnership of the royal bed, and becoming Mother of an heir apparent to the Crown, is ennobled and royalised by such an alliance, and her original meanness thereby obliterated; what opinion must we entertain of the Blessed Virgin, who became Spouse of the Holy Ghost, and Mother of a God Incarnate?

A cursory view of the sacred History of her elevation to the Maternity, will give us the justest idea of her intrinsic merit and excellencies. This is faithfully set forth in the plain and unornamented account the Evangelist gives of her Annunciation or Salutation, which, otherwise, may be called an Embassy to her from the Court of Heaven; and certainly the most surprizing that ever was heard of, and mysterious

rious in every circumstance; *to wit*, an Angel delegated from the Creator to a Creature, from the Blessed Trinity to a poor Maid dwelling in a contemptible cottage in Nazareth. Thus the Evangelist relates this astonishing event: — *The Angel Gabriel, says he, was sent by GOD into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a Virgin — and the Virgin's name was MARY.* Luke i. 26, &c.

THE subject of the embassy was yet more unprecedented and astonishing than the embassy itself, it being to demand her concurrence to the accomplishment of the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, thro' the ineffable operation of the Holy Ghost upon her. *The Holy Ghost, says the Evangelist, shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee.* Luke i. 35.

Now, could the Deity on his side stoop lower, or a creature be possibly exalted to a higher pinnacle of honour? The dignity of the creature rises by the humiliation of the Creator. But the manner in which this celestial Envoy opened his Embassy, is another circumstance of surprize, and reflecting still more honour to the Blessed Virgin. This was his Salutation — *Hail! full of Grace, our Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst Women.* Ibid.

Full of Grace, indeed: for, whether we consider the extraordinary gifts, on the part of Heaven, infused into her, to qualify her for her sublime station, or the eminent virtues she exercised on her side in the accomplishment of the decreed mystery, it must be said that nothing less than a plenitude of Grace possessed her blessed Soul. To this fulness of Grace is to be referred her unparalleled purity, by a special privilege, while she became a Mother, continuing a Virgin, in which, as St. BERNARD observes, she never was known to have had her precedent before, or her fellow since — *nec primam similem visa est, nec habere sequentem.*

To this plenitude of grace is to be attributed her unlimited obedience to the Divine Decrees; at the same time that she declared the Mystery to be above her comprehension, consenting, without the least hesitation, to be concurring to the accomplishment of it — *Be it unto me*, replied she to the Angel, *according to thy word*, Luke i. 26, &c.

FROM the same source, her fulness of Grace, flowed her unprecedented and inimitable Humility, after she had been elevated to the dignity of being Mother of God, styling herself the *Handmaid of the Lord*. Ibid.

IF the Evangelist had supplied us with no other informations of her pre-eminent merits, this single testimony is enough to give us the highest idea of them, and to entitle her to our distinguished respect and veneration: and, on the other hand, effectually stops the mouths of her enemies, who ground their slight of her memory, and affect to justify this conduct, on the pretended reservedness and silence of the inspired penmen in her regard. For, to have been indued with such a plenitude of grace as to become entirely agreeable to the Almighty: and such the celestial envoy declared her, when encouraging her to acquiesce, without reserve, to the divine will, he said, *Fear not MARY, for thou hast found favour with God*. To be wholly absorpt in God, and to have God reciprocally united to her, insinuated by those prior words of the Salutation, *the Lord is with thee*, and taking an intimate complacency in the beauty of her pure soul: these inestimable advantages, I say, convey to us the idea of a creature the most perfect and excellent that can be imagined; and were the effectual cause that the Angel instantly pronounced her Blessed — *Blessed art thou amongst women*.

YET these extraordinary ornaments of her soul, we have hitherto enumerated, were only a preparatory disposition to her decreed espousals with the Holy Ghost: the means to render her a fit receptacle for the Eternal Word to become Incarnate within her chaste

chaste bowels; and was in short, only a prelude to her future sanctity. “From hence,” says St. AUSTIN, “we gather the Blessed Virgin’s fulness of grace to enable her to conquer all sin, because she was to conceive and bring forth him (the Word Incarnate) who was wholly without sin,” St. Aug. Serm. 2. de Anunc. But how great her future sanctity proved to be, after she had been overshadowed by the Divine Spirit: after she was possessed of the source of all sanctity within her womb: after, by Above thirty years conversation and intimacy with the author of all grace, a continual flow of this celestial dew had penetrated into her soul—what, I say, her eminent sanctity was, resulting from such singular and accumulated advantages, is not easy to say; nor has the Evangelist explicitly declared; leaving to us to form a conception of it from these auspicious beginnings, and from the nature of the circumstances in which she was concerned. For if, usually speaking, the integrity of our lives, and the rectitude of our manners, are to be gathered from our conversation; canvassing, I say, the Blessed Virgin’s virtues and merits by this rule, how much do they rise in real value, and ought, proportionably, to rise in our estimation, knowing that she conversed, was intimate with, and possessed the Holy of Holies?

PREVIOUSLY to these great advantages, the Angel, as we have already heard, did not doubt to pronounce her *Blessed among women*: her Cousin St. ELIZABETH, divinely inspired, saluted her with the same title; and the Blessed Virgin herself, though through her unparalleled humility, demeaning herself in her own sentiments, in proportion to the height of honour she had been raised to by the Almighty, styling herself the *Handmaid of the Lord*, at the very time she was assumed to the title of the Maternity; yet this greatest, and together the humblest of all pure creatures, enlightened and prompted by the Divine Spirit, also foretells her Prerogative to be the means of perpetuating

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her name in benediction to all succeeding generations. *My soul, says she, magnifies the Lord—because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold! from henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed, because he that is mighty hath done great things to me.* Luk i. 46, &c.

THE Catholic Church literally fulfils this prediction as often as she invokes her assistance, or otherwise occasionally mentions her name, by styling her Blessed, and by paying her all the veneration which is due to that title. And the abettors of the Reformation, on the other hand, have reason to take shame to themselves, not only for waving, for the most part, both in their familiar conversations and in their writings, to give her this epithet, which she lays such an indisputable claim to, but chiefly for catching at every frivolous pretence to discredit her memory. For,

BESIDES the mistaken silence of the Sacred Writers in her regard, already fully accounted for, the incidental behaviour of our Blessed Saviour to her, related in the Gospel, at the Marriage in Cana of Galilee, or on other occasions, interpreted by the impugnors of her name, to carry an air of indifference to her, is brought as another argument for their odious purpose.

MR. LESLEY, aforesaid, industriously also signals himself on this head, when he has the confidence to say, hauling in St. Epiphanius for his voucher, or rather misrepresenting that Father's sentiments to justify his own "that our Blessed Lord, foreseeing the
"superstition, that would come into the world on account of his Mother, *treated her always at a distance,*
"never once called her Mother — no not upon the
"Cross — or by any appellation than that of *Woman*;
"and, *checking her forwardness*, said unto her, *Woman,*
"what have I to do with thee? &c. &c. Lesley Case Stated.

HERE now are the sentiments of a pious and learned Father, for the most shameful purpose that could be, viz. for the sake of depreciating the sacred memory
of

of the Mother of our Redeemer, foully misrepresented, as to the drift and intent of what *he did say*, and words put into his mouth, *which he did not say*. First, as to the drift of this holy Father's discourse, 'tis plain that it was not to discountenance a dutiful respect to the Blessed Virgin's memory, (such as the Catholic Church gives her) but to explode a delirious heresy of the Collyridians, a set of doting women of Thrace, who took it into their heads to make the Blessed Virgin a Deity, and to *worship her with Sacrifice*; whose ridiculous phrensy he condemns, by proving the Blessed Virgin not to be any thing above the *condition and nature of a Woman*.

THE words of the Father, faithfully rendered, are these — “Wherefore we are also precautioned by the “holy Gospel; wherein CHRIST speaks thus, *Woman*, “*what is that to me and to thee? my hour is not yet come,*” John ii. 4. “where, for this reason, he called her “*Woman*, lest any one should believe the Blessed Virgin to be of some more *excellent nature* than the rest “of her sex; giving her, as it were prophetically, “that name, to confute the heresies and schisms which “he knew would, in after times, happen in the world; “and lest any one, through an excessive opinion of “the most holy Virgin, should be addicted to the “dotage and fooleries of that heresy,” St. Epiph. l. iii. T. 4. H. 79.

THESE are the true words of the Father, divested of the odious additions Mr. Lesley has liberally foisted in, of CHRIST's *calling the Blessed Virgin*, always, *Woman* — never by the tender name of *Mother* — of *treating her at a distance*, and *checking her forwardness*; with a string of other spiteful reflections I am ashamed to repeat.

AND tho' the objection, in the whole, carries with it the glaring appearance of spleen and prejudice, as little becoming a Christian as a Divine, and without the least foundation in justice; however, in order to give a further answer to it, which is more than it deserves, I

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must premise that our Blessed Lord is to be considered in a *double capacity*; to wit, in his *public*, and in his *private* and *filial capacity*. In his *public capacity* he appeared and acted as the *Son of GOD*, and as the promised *MESSIAH*; was paving the way for the establishment of his Church, and was wholly attentive to the discharge of the several functions of his Divine Ministry, which was one motive or end of his being and conversing with us in Human flesh; and therefore at these times he became *All to All*, without respect to persons, his Blessed Mother not excepted. We have an early proof of this system of action, when, at the age of twelve years, being found by his Blessed Mother, and reputed Father St. JOSEPH, after three days search, in the Temple; and they had tenderly expressed the uneasiness his absence had lain them under, he made this short answer; that he was taken up in the business of his Eternal Father — *Did you not know*, says he, *that I must be about my Father's business?* Luke ii. 49. signifying thereby, that to *this*, every other concern was to give way. His reply, on another occasion, to them that brought him word his Mother and Brethren were waiting for him without doors — *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, he is my Brother, my Sister, and my Mother*, Matt. xii. 50. was an insinuation of the same truth; meaning, that the discharge of his functions, in obedience to the divine counsels, was his present employ, and the sole object of his attention; and therefore, on the occasion of the marriage-feast, his answer to his Blessed Mother, minding him of the want of wine — *Woman, what is that to me and to thee, my time is not yet come*, cannot be looked upon in any other light than as a bare admonition and remembrance of the same truth, insinuating, I say, that he was acting then in his *superior capacity*, by the immediate influence and direction from above; and therefore that it behoved him

him to delay the manifestation of his miraculous power, till the time preordained, as he himself tells her, saying, *My time is not yet come*, John ii. 4.

THIS I apprehend to be all that can be gathered from the words our Blessed Saviour spoke to his Blessed Mother on this occasion, and the whole extent of their meaning, exclusive of the least shadow of a disregard to her; at least, I dare be positive, that this interpretation is more natural and easy, and much less disrespectful to her memory, than the indecent construction Mr. Lesley, above cited, has not been ashamed to put upon it, of their being “a rebuke and check” to the Blessed Virgin’s forwardness.” On the contrary, if this passage is to be thought in any shape to affect the Blessed Virgin, it was certainly by reflecting greater honour to the Mother, in becoming a token of her powerful interest with the Son, while the first miracle, as St. JOHN notes, wrought by him, was done at her intercession, or at least by her motion and suggestion. John ii. 11.

As then our Blessed Lord’s pretended neglect of his Mother, when he was acting in his *public* capacity, is so justly accounted for; so his superlative respect and regard for her in his *private* Life, which was from his infancy till he was thirty years old, is equally certain, and must be acknowledged by all hands. The Evangelist declares it in few words, but fully; saying, That *he was subject* (Luke ii. 51.) that is, obedient, *to them*; which succinctly comprises the whole sum of filial duty.

I’ll close this testimony of our Blessed Lord’s respect for his Mother, during the long course of his private and hidden life, with a profession he made of his tender regard for her on a public occasion, at a time when every word he uttered, particularly demands our attention; ought to be carefully treasured up in our breast, and never to be out of our memory. It must be obvious, to every one, that the instance I hint at, is the endearing remembrance, our dying Lord made
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of his doleful Mother at his last moments; when, knowing to what degree her heart was pierced thro' with the sword of grief, and seeing the inundation of affliction that overwhelmed her blessed Soul, he would seem to forget his own sorrows, in order to relieve her, by committing her to St. JOHN's care, trust, and protection; saying to her — *Woman, behold thy Son!* and to the disciple — *Behold thy Mother!* John xix. 26, 27. Thus did he recommend the most valuable Treasure he left behind him, *his dearly beloved Mother*, to his *chiefly beloved disciple*.

Now this instance, I am sure, is no mark of our Blessed Saviour's indifference to his Mother; but is, on the contrary, an irrefragable proof of his singular regard and concern for her, while he eminently distinguishes her from every other.

AND this answer I think to be more than sufficient to her enemies shameful objection; which, indeed, carries with it such a shocking idea, that one may justly wonder how it could ever enter into the mind and imagination of a Christian.

BUT, besides what has been urged through this Section, from reason itself, and the obvious result of our own unprejudiced thoughts on the subject, in defence of the Blessed Virgin's honour: her pre-eminent and singular prerogatives, so incontestably asserted, if the Angel GABRIEL is to be relied on, who declares them, or the Evangelist to be credited who records them; these prerogatives, I say, overpoise every negative objection which wit, dissingenuity or malice can devise, to extenuate her distinguished merits: they are an aggravation of the extravagant folly, as well as ingratitude of the enemies of her name, in attempting it; and at the same time become the foundation of our inviolable attachment to her memory, and an irrefragable proof that the stedfast confidence, the Catholic Church reposes in her powerful Intercession, and the extraordinary devotions she has instituted, and daily addresses.

addresses to this greatest, holiest, and purest of all creatures, are prudential and entirely regular.

SECTION II.

The Prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin, aforesaid, bespeak our singular veneration of and attachment to her; and render the extraordinary confidence we repose in her intercession, and our devotions to her discreet and regular.

THAT we ought to respect every creature whom Almighty God himself deigns to distinguish with particular tokens of his Divine honour and favour, is a truth, I apprehend, evident from the light of reason; and which no one will presume to contest. *Honour*, says the Apostle, *to whom honour is due*. Rom. xiii. 7. Upon this principle we pay a deference not only to Princes, Magistrates, Masters, and to all in power, but to every one, whom Almighty God has placed above us in any superiority of life, either with respect to birth or fortune. The great ones of this world square their conduct in their political government by this same rule, in requiring a homage to be paid to their favourite ministers and servants. In this manner Pharaoh honoured the Patriarch Joseph, and Assuerus rewarded the fidelity of Mardochai. And it is found, by constant experience, that the most effectual way of gaining access to the Prince, is to make court to a servant in favour and power: and, on the other hand, a contempt, or slight of persons placed in superiority, is frequently punished in an exemplary manner, both by God and Man; as is known from numerous instances in the sacred History.

Now, if any one has the front to deny the Blessed Virgin to have been the distinguished favourite of Heaven: to have been singled out, by Almighty God, from the whole race of mankind, as the object of his extraordinary honour, favour, and friendship; towards the

the ornamenting of whose amiable soul he had opened the whole treasury of his divine graces: if any one I say, will dare to dispute her these prerogatives, I humbly apprehend that the proofs for them I have produced in the foregoing section, are sufficient to confute him: and in the mean while, joining the said premises with my present assertion, that it is incumbent on us to honour those whom Almighty God deigns to honour; this being admitted, (which cannot be denied) a respective veneration of the Blessed Virgin becomes a duty on us not to be dispensed with; and such our veneration ought to be, as to keep pace, in some degree, with the honours conferred upon her by the Almighty; that is, we should endeavour to copy, as near as we are able, the divine pattern, in paying her extraordinary respect whom Almighty God has vouchsafed to distinguish with extraordinary and singular marks of his grace and favour. To swerve a tittle from this conduct, is to censure the conduct of a superior Providence in her regard, and, as it were, to find fault with the distinctions shewn her, the profusion of an inexhaustible treasury, and an Almighty, bountiful hand; which can be nothing less than blasphemy: and therefore, even a Protestant Prelate, Dr. Pearson, in his exposition of the Creed, p. 179. could not refrain to avow, “ That we cannot bear
 “ too reverend a regard to the Mother of our Lord,
 “ so long as we give her not that worship which is
 “ due unto the Lord himself.”

FROM our aforesaid reasoning, so just and indisputable, I presume to conclude that the neglect and slight, the bulk of the Reformers affect to shew to the Mother of God, (not to give it a worse name) is as unwarrantable, as we think the peculiar veneration the Catholic Church pays to her memory, to be, from the said premises, entirely discreet and rational.

THE first time the Church had occasion of exerting herself with eclat and solemnity in defence of the Blessed Virgin's honour, was, in the fifth century; when

when it was invaded by the wicked NESTORIUS, contesting the prerogative of her Maternity. This impious dogma no sooner made its appearance, but the whole Catholic world took the alarm, expressed their abhorrence of it, evident marks of its being a novelty till then unheard of, and anathematized it in the most solemn manner, in council assembled: the word Θεοτόκος, meaning Mother of God, was adopted on this occasion, fitted to explain the Faith of the Church beyond ambiguity, and to settle the prerogative of the Blessed Virgin's Maternity out of dispute.

HEAVEN itself seemed visibly to interest itself in the Blessed Virgin's cause, and to ratify the sentence, the Church had pronounced against this impious Heretic, by inflicting a judgment upon him corresponding to the nature of his guilt: for, as we are credibly informed from ecclesiastical history, his tongue, which had vomited out his injurious blasphemies against the Mother of God, rotted in his head, while he was yet alive; God testifying, by his temporal execution of his justice, how jealous he was of his Blessed Mother's honour. Baronius, Fleury, &c. Hist. Eccles.

I do not, indeed, charge upon the generality of our modern Reformers the individual blasphemy of this arch-heretic, so exemplarily punished by God, and execrated by every good Christian: and as for those who at least, tread so nearly in his steps, as to profess a manifest disregard to the Blessed Virgin's memory; since her undoubted prerogatives are not prevalent enough to bring them over to her interest, it cannot be expected that the relation of prodigies, which they may not be inclined to believe, though ever so credibly attested, will ever effect it. Therefore my sole drift, in introducing this instance from ecclesiastical history, is, to shew, by the vigorous resistance the Church made against this avowed enemy of the Blessed Virgin's name, at that early time, how constant it's attachment to her has been at all times; how uniform it's sentiments in the Blessed Virgin's regard, and how

steady it's zeal in asserting her honour, on the least appearance of an attempt made upon it.

NOR was this zeal confined to a bare confession, and defence of her prerogatives; nor to a speculative, sterile admiration of her virtues: she has also extended it to a dutiful homage of gratitude, which she never failed to pay to her memory; and to a pious confidence in her powerful interest and intercession.

OF the first sort, are those repeated Antitheses, with which the writings of the Holy Fathers abound, between our Mother EVE, as the cause of our ruin, and the Mother of our Lord, as the happy instrument of our reparation; with acts of acknowledgement and thanksgiving for this ineffable blessing. The following extracts are a few, out of a great many of that tenor.

ST. IRENÆUS says, that “as EVE, deporting herself refractorily to God's command, became the cause of death to herself and her posterity; so MARY by her respective obsequiousness to the Divine Will, has been the (instrumental) cause of our salvation—*causa facta est salutis.*” St. Iren. lib. 3. c. 33. Again, “she was influenced, *says he*, to be obedient to God—thereby MARY, a Virgin, becoming an advocate for EVE, a Virgin; so that, as human race was brought to ruin by a Virgin, it was saved by a Virgin; the obedience of one ballancing the disobedience of the other.” St. Iren. lib. 5. c. 19.

TERTULLIAN, to the same purport, says that “as we were lost by the sex, so we were restored by it—EVE, believing the serpent, was guilty of Sin; MARY, giving credit to the Angel GABRIEL, was instrumental to its being cancelled—*hec credendo delevit.*” Tertul. de Carn. Christ. c. 17.

And, in fine, St. EPIPHANIUS, to omit many others, conformable to the sentiments of the Fathers we have just recited, says, “Truly, by the Blessed Virgin MARY was the world restored to life—EVE brought death upon

“ upon us ; MARY brought forth the Source of Life.”
St. Epiph. Hær. 78. 318.

I MUST observe that the expressions, these Fathers make use of, in their acknowledgment of their obligations to the Blessed Virgin, rise to such a height of hyperbole, calling her the cause of our reparation, and saying that she cancelled sin, (so TERTULLIAN above, literally rendered, expresses himself) as would be received with loud outcries and abhorrence, coming out of a Catholic mouth, at this time ; and indeed being taken rigorously to the letter, are false and blasphemous ; but as these holy Doctors meant them, and as the Catholic Church always understood them, *to wit*, that she is the instrumental cause of our reparation ; that she is the medium Almighty God made use of to bring about the great mercy of our Redemption, and the destruction of sin, were strictly true ; because she was the Mother of CHRIST, a God Incarnate, who was the immediate cause of our reparation, and who effectually cancelled the whole guilt and debt of sin ; which made St. JEROM say, that “ we respect her as the Author of our Salvation, because in receiving from Heaven the Author of her “ being and ours, in her womb, she has given us a “ Redeemer upon earth.” St. Hierom. de Assump.

THIS eclairsissement of the elevated sentiments and speeches of the primitive Fathers relatively to the Mother of God, as often as they celebrated her transcendant virtues and prerogatives, I judged necessary, for their vindication and ours ; and I may say, in behalf of the Blessed Virgin herself ; because we have to deal with adversaries who are fond of depreciating her memory at any rate, and are ready to cavil at every thing we offer in defence of so good a cause. Having done the Blessed Virgin and ourselves this justice, I must now beg leave to observe further, that to the bill of debt to the Mother of our Redeemer, for the benefit of our reparation resulting from her, in the manner we have now shewn, to which these eminent

Doctors and lights of the Church unanimously subscribed, they have occasionally subjoined repeated professions of their undoubted confidence in her powerful interest, as intercessor for us to the throne of mercy, as is plain from their following short and fervent ejaculations, as well as from other passages, we have already, and shall presently cite, in which they fully declare their sentiments on this head.

To you have we recourse, O Blessed amongst Women! cried out the great ORIGEN, who lived in the infant age of the Church; and had he been guilty of any excess in this point, would certainly have been noted for it by some of the cotemporary Fathers of the Church, as he was for other errors and exotical opinions.

INTERCEDE for us, O Mistress, Lady, Queen and Mother of God, was the affectionate address of the Catholic Champion, St. ATHANASIUS.

I THROW myself at your feet, was the ejaculation of St. EPHREM.

SUPPLICATE Almighty God to save our souls! sighed out, in earnest prayer, the great light of the Oriental Church, St. CHRYSOSTOM.

AND St. AUSTIN with a heart, as it were inflamed and an intire reliance on the interest of this great Advocatrice in Heaven, addresses her in terms that might be liable to censure, had he not explained himself on other occasions, as he has in what we quoted from him p. 142, 143. "You Oh MARY!" says he, "are the only hopes of sinners (that is thro' JESUS CHRIST) on your powerful interest (with God, and your Blessed Son) rest our expectations of an Eternal Crown." St. Austin. Serm. 2. de Anunc.

St. JUSTINA, as St. GREGORY NAZIENZEN informs us, being assaulted by magical enchantments had recourse to God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, beseeching the Virgin, to be assistant to her, a distressed virgin. St. Greg. Naz. Orat. 18. T. 1. p. 279.

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ALL these short aspirations, or ejaculations, plainly declare the entire confidence these virtuous and eminent lights of the Church reposed in the Blessed Virgin's powerful interest and intercession, and were so many earnest supplications to her for it.

To the inflamed aspirations of these orthodox Fathers of the Church, which discover the intimate sentiments of their heart, I beg leave to add the testimony of a learned man of a latter date; and though in other respects reprobable, yet a creditable witness, in this point, of its being the avowed belief and practice of his Church at that time.

THE testimony I am going to produce, is from a sermon of the learned PHOTIUS, the schismatic patriarch of Constantinople, about the ninth century, delivered upon the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, as follows. “But you, O Blessed Virgin, and also Mother of the Eternal Word, our propitiation and refuge—interceding for us with your Son, and our God; and approaching him as our Mediatrix, — vouchsafe to render us your panegyrist, after you have purged us from all filth and blemish, fit to be admitted to the celestial nuptials.”

BUT there can be no stronger testimony to the universal sentiments of the whole body of the Fathers, or rather, of the whole Church, on this head, than the prayer annexed to the angelical salutation—“Holy MARY Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death”—which, if it was not framed by the Fathers, assembled in the Council of Ephesus, in order to assert the Blessed Virgin's prerogative, as from tradition has been constantly supposed was, at least, adopted by the Church, and in general use, among the whole body of the faithful, time immemorial before the epoch of the Reformation.

THE undoubted trust, the Church constantly reposed in the interest of the Blessed Virgin and the rest of the Saints at the Court of Heaven, was declared in a most solemn manner, and at a most solemn time, by her

her representatives in the second Council of Nice, Act vi. in the following short emphatic speech. — “ Let us
 “ therefore,” says she, “ have the fear of God
 “ before our eyes in all we do, (for this effect) sol-
 “ liciting also the intercession of the ever unspotted
 “ Virgin MARY, our Lady, and Mother of God,
 “ and of all the Angels and Saints.” And though
 it may perhaps, be objected to this said Council,
 that the national Gallican Council of Frankfort, soon
 after, thro’ a mistaken information or a misapprehen-
 sion of another Act of this second Nicene Council, con-
 cerning the veneration of images, demurred for a
 while, to that article (which however upon a stricter
 recognisance of the matter she afterwards came into)
 yet be this as it will, it can be of no prejudice to her
 decree for invoking the Saints: on the contrary, her
 boggling expressly at the one, till it was cleared up,
 and her utter silence to the other is a tacit intima-
 tion of her approving it, and that she looked upon
 it as an uncontroverted practice of the whole Catholic
 Church.

ANY greater evidence therefore than this, *viz.* the
 voice of the Church by a public declaration of her
 Council, for the point we have undertaken to maintain,
 could not I think be required; yet if the testimony of
 the second Council of Nice be thought of too late a
 date to be admitted by a Protestant jury, I will appeal
 to the first Nicene Council: For, what that great cham-
 pion of the Church St. ATHANASIUS, in the said Coun-
 cil, has said upon any point of the Catholic Faith, must
 I conceive, be allowed to be the sense of her, and her
 Council: and yet, not more strenuous an assertor of the
 Divinity of the Son, than zealous for the prerogatives of
 the Mother, and her professed client, he thus delivers
 himself on this subject: “ Whereas, says he, CHRIST,
 “ born of a Virgin, being our King, is also our Lord
 “ and GOD; for this reason his Mother, who gave
 “ him birth is truly and properly deemed Queen, Lady
 “ and Mother of GOD. This new EVE is stiled the
 “ Mother

“ Mother of life, — therefore we pronounce her again
 “ and again, and every way Most Blessed. To thee we
 “ cry out, Be mindful of us Oh blessed Virgin! who
 “ even in your childbirth remained a Virgin, *Hail full of*
 “ *grace, the Lord is with thee.* — Thee the angelical and
 “ terrestrial hierarchies proclaim Blessed. *Blessed art*
 “ *thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy*
 “ *womb.* Oh! Mistress, Lady intercede for us!
 “ Queen and Mother of God pray for us.” Athan.
 in Sermon. Sup. Evang. de Sanctissimâ Deiparâ.

THUS the great defender of the Catholic Faith in
 the first Council of Nice, St. ATHANASIUS.

AND the entire consent of the Greek and Latin
 Churches in this material article, is observable from the
 passages that are promiscuously gathered out of the
 greatest Lights and Doctors of both of them.

WHAT were the sentiments of St. AUSTIN on this
 subject matter, and how he was affected to this purest
 and most excellent of all creatures, and the entire confi-
 dence he reposed in her interest at the throne of
 mercy, is to be gathered from the short fervent ad-
 dresses he made to her in particular, which we lately
 heard, and from the general one he made to the
 Blessed Virgin jointly, with the whole Court of Hea-
 ven, quoted in the last chapter, p. 142, 143. But I can-
 not forbear closing the above extracts from him and the
 other Holy Fathers by giving one passage at length,
 generally supposed to be St. AUSTIN's, and is placed
 among his sermons, Sermon. 18. de Sanctis, or, Edit.
 Lovan. Sermon. 2. and though by some ascribed to St.
 FULGENTIUS Bishop of Carthage, who lived in the
 next century, and was cotemporary with St. GREGORY
 the Great: yet as he was in high esteem with and
 much commended by that supreme PONTIF and Doctor
 of the Church; and as he was the scourge of the heretics
 of his own time, and the principal restorer of the purity
 of the Catholic Faith to the Churches of Spain and
 Africa; be the passage I am going to produce, St.
 AUSTIN's or his, the recited circumstances must give it

so much weight as to render it an act of the greatest rashness, to object either to it's authority or antiquity. The words, then, are as follow: "Oh blessed among Women! who, knowing no man, yet conceived man in your womb — MARY conceived man by giving credit to the Angel; because Eve was the ruin of man, by listening to the illusions of the serpent. Oh! happy obedience — Oh! surprising operation of Divine Grace. *Blessed Mary!* what sufficient thanks can we return to you, who, by your single consent, became a seasonable succour to the world that had perished — What praises shall our frail nature give you? since, by your communication with the Eternal Word, you have opened the way to our recovery from our shipwrecked state. Accept, therefore, our acts of thanksgiving, tho' mean and unequal to your merits; and, when you receive our vows, excuse, thro' your intercession, our failings. Vouchsafe to listen to our prayers, and to procure, in return for them, our happy reconciliation. What we importunately intrude, thro' you, on the Throne of Mercy, may it, thro' your interest, be excused — What we confidently request, by you, may it, by your intercession, be obtained. Receive our offerings — graciously give what we ask; *because you are the only hopes of sinners. Thro' you we trust in the forgiveness of our sins:* on you, Oh! most blessed among women! *is our dependance and expectation of our reward.* Holy MARY! vouchsafe to succour the miserable, support the faint-hearted, cheer up those that are in tears, (and affliction) pray for the People (the Laity in general) interpose in behalf of the Clergy, (in particular) intercede for the devout Female Sex — Let all who celebrate your sacred Festival, feel the effects of your seasonable aid." St. Aust. Serm. 18. de Sanct. in Med.

In this passage of the great and holy Doctor, to which soever of the two, St. AUSTIN or St. FULGEN-

Thus, it belongs, is to be observed, that the Father plainly asserts the two points we undertook to prove; *to wit*, he first establishes, as an incontestable truth, the Blessed Virgin's transcendent prerogatives; and, secondly, he lays these down as the foundation of his undoubted trust in her powerful patronage. Whatsoever addresses the Catholic Church makes to the Mother of God, in her Litanies, or any other part of her Liturgy, at this time, whether by way of honour or supplication, I dare be positive that they do not rise higher than the nervous and elevated expressions of this learned and pious Father; and as they tally intirely with what we have lately cited from St. ATHANASIUS and the other Lights of the Greek Church, they shew, as I before observed, the consent of both Churches in this point, or rather they declare the unanimous sentiments of the whole Catholic Church at that early age. How different, alas! from the avowed sentiments of the modern adversaries of the Blessed Virgin's name!

I WAS acquainted with an eminent Protestant Divine, who was not ashamed to say, "That it would equally avail him, to pray to his old deceased mother, as to invoke the Virgin MARY." The indecency of this expression is so shocking in itself, and contemptuous of this cherished favourite of Heaven, that it is astonishing how any one could have the assurance to utter it; who owned her to be Mother of God, and being read in Scriptures, and believing them to be revealed truths, must be convinced from them of the Blessed Virgin's other additional prerogatives; and yet, tho' perhaps there may be few who would be so rash as to talk the same unbecoming language in terms, it is to be feared there are many who, in the main, chime with him in his way of thinking, so disrespectful and injurious to the Blessed Virgin's memory.

BUT while her enemies entertain ideas so slighting and contemptuous of her, and so prejudicial to themselves, in debarring themselves the benefit of her patronage;

tronage; we, on the contrary, declare, with the holy Fathers just cited, That we have a stedfast belief of her great power and interest in Heaven, and consequently thereto, repose in her an intire confidence, as an intercessor for us to Almighty God. Her personal extraordinary prerogatives, so often commemorated, plead her power: reason, and self-love, prompt us to place our dependance on it. For, if the Saints and Angels, who are only the servants, or bare friends, of God, have an undoubted access to the Throne of Mercy in our behalf, as we have already shewn, who will be so injurious to the Mother of God, as to think that she is kept at a distance from it? On the contrary, what interest they may have by indulgence, seems to be, as it were, the Blessed Virgin's due, in right of her Maternity. For, what will not the Blessed Trinity grant, at her request towards the perfecting our reconciliation with his offended justice, who made the first overture to it himself, thro' her concurrence, by demanding her consent to the accomplishment of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word within her chaste bowels?

— ST. AUSTIN, or be he, as some are pleased to suppose, St. FULGENTIUS, was so much affected with this weighty consideration, as not to doubt to say, that “by means of this, the Blessed Virgin's sole consent, the world, being fettered in the bondage of sin, received the first glimmering hopes of relief from it's slavery. *Quæ singulari tuo assensu mundo succuristi perditio.*” St. Aust. Sermon. 18. de Sanctis.

AND, in these sentiments, the holy Doctor only speaks after St. ELIZABETH, who, divinely inspired, told the Blessed Virgin, *Blessed art thou, who hast believed, because the things shall be accomplished which were spoken to thee by the Lord.* Luke i. 45.

IT therefore being so, we cannot imagine that God can deny this creature any thing at her request, whom, from the beginning, he distinguished by such remarkable tokens of his favour: and, again, she who was
made

made worthy to have the Word Incarnate obsequious to her beck here upon earth, he having been subject and obedient to her, as the Evangelist assures us; what interest may not she be supposed to have with him, now that he is seated on the right hand of his Eternal Father, in his Throne of Glory and Majesty, swaying the sceptre of power and universal command over Heaven and Earth? — *To me is given all power in Heaven and Earth.* Matt. v. 18.

If her will and inclination to serve us be the point in question; her eminent charity, transcending that of the Cherubims and Seraphims, and the whole choir of celestial Spirits, ascertain it beyond all dispute, and prove these benevolent dispositions inherent to her in a superior degree: therefore the Church, copying after St. AUSTIN and other holy Fathers, does not think she exceeds in styling her “the refuge of sinners” and Mother of grace and mercy;” not by supposing her the author of these gifts (as I observed above in the third preliminary of this chapter) but by having, thro’ her unbounded charity, a prompt will and inclination to request them for us, and as Mother of CHRIST, who is the source of grace and mercy, having an undoubted interest with him to obtain what she requests. In this single title of Mother of God, as has been shewn, all other titles are included and centred; and therefore the confidence we place in her, resting on this foundation, becomes rational and prudential. In short, every proof urged in the last chapter, in vindication of the Invocation of Saints and Angels, enforces, in the strongest manner, the reasonableness and lawfulness of our addresses to the Blessed Virgin; because, as her prerogatives are so far superior to those of every other Saint and Angel, her interest and charity rise in proportion: And therefore the position then settled (*that the Saints can serve us — that they have a will to serve us; and that therefore it is lawful to request their service*) is still more conclusive in the Blessed Virgin’s regard.

OUR adversaries, when they are no longer able to withstand these undeniable consequences, attempt to elude the force of them, by having recourse to their old threadbare shift, of charging on us excesses and abuses in the devotions instituted by the Church, and daily practised either in honour of the Blessed Virgin's memory, or by way of impetration of her powerful intercession. What they would mean is, indeed, hard to say; but, if any thing, it must amount to this — that these devotions are either reprobable in their nature and intent, or in the frequency and repetition of them. But the notes we premised in the beginning of this chapter, effectually obviate and refute this objection under the first notion; while, from these aforesaid premises, it is evident that we look on the Blessed Virgin in the sphere and condition of a pure creature, infinitely distant from God: our devotions and petitions are directed to her as to a bare intercessor for us, and have not the least tendency of Divine Worship. I say, therefore, under these limitations and restrictions they cannot be reputed illicit, or reprobable in themselves, and their own nature.

THE objection under the second consideration is equally groundless, and even ridiculous; because what is in itself lawful, cannot, by a repetition of it, become unlawful; and therefore if addressing the Blessed Virgin by one act of devotion or prayer directed to her, be lawful and regular, by addressing her ten times in the same manner, we only so many times repeat the same lawful act.

As often as we approach strait to the Throne of Mercy, by a prayer immediately directed to God himself, as in the Lord's Prayer, we exercise an act of adoration, humiliation, and dependance on God, as the Source and Bestower of all Blessings, spiritual and temporal; and, when we address him thro' the Blessed Virgin, we do not thereby pay him less these divine tributes, which are his peculiar due as the Author of
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our being ; nor do we presume to withdraw our immediate dependance on his goodness and mercy : but we only subjoin an additional relative honour, by glorifying him in the Blessed Virgin, in consequence to the previous marks of honour and distinction, he himself had conferred upon her. And, lastly, being conscious of our own unworthiness, and justly distrustful of the success of our own prayers, we invoke the Blessed Virgin's power, merits, and mediate intercession to come to our aid : so that, in short, our having recourse to the Blessed Virgin does not extenuate our fundamental dependance on Almighty God, but rather heightens our trust in him, through the Blessed Virgin's powerful mediation. To Almighty God we say, *Lord, have mercy on us ; Christ, have mercy on us.*—To the Blessed Virgin, as to the rest of the Saints, *pray for us ; intercede for us.*—Almighty God we beg to give us his divine grace—the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints, we desire to request it for us. And how agreeable to Almighty God is the mediation of the Just, we have had a proof in the case of the friends of Job, where it was enjoined by Almighty God himself, and accepted of preferably to their own prayers, humiliation and sacrifice. How much, then, more agreeable, and likely to prevail, is the interest and intercession of the Mother of God ? And, if so, why may it not be lawfully coveted and requested ?

THE last objection, of any weight, deserving to come under our notice, and which, if it were supported by the least colour of justice and truth, ought, no doubt, to take place, is, that our distinguished zeal for the Mother is an encroachment on the honour and prerogative of the Son, as our Mediator between his Eternal Father and us. But, besides that this weak and groundless indictment has been, several times, over-ruled in the course of this Controversy ; besides that the specific difference, settled in the preliminaries to this Controversy, between the mediation of Redemption

demption and of pure intercession, refutes this charge at once, and evinces, to a demonstration, that the interest of the Blessed Virgin no way interferes with the satisfactory merits of CHRIST; I beg leave to add, that our singular attachment to the Blessed Virgin, and the devotions, the Catholic Church has instituted in her honour, or for the sake of supplicating her intercession, have a quite different tendency, in their own nature from what our adversaries misrepresent them; and I presume to think, that, on the other hand, their avowed slight of the Mother is generally followed by a neglect of the Son, tho' disguised under an affected jealousy of, and a pretended zeal for his honour.

THE whole sum of our duty to CHRIST, I apprehend to consist in these three substantial points, *viz. in believing in him — in trusting in his Merits — and obeying his Precepts.* Now, first, that our attachment to the Blessed Virgin is no ways destructive of, or prejudicial to our firm belief in CHRIST, but rather an encouragement to it, is most evident; because it is grounded on her Prerogatives, which derive all their lustre from CHRIST, and are only, as it were, a reflection of the glory of the Son to the Mother: for it is thro' our steadfast belief of his Divinity, that we respect and honour the Blessed Virgin, subministring to him her Flesh in the accomplishment of the Mystery of the Incarnation, as Mother of God; and that we suppose her to have been favoured with the additional accumulation of graces, already recited, in order to fit her for the sublime station to which she had been elected. The Son is therefore the fundamental cause of all her Privileges, and the immediate object of our veneration; and we do not pretend to honour the Mother but with reference to the Son, and in him. "There is no question, says St. JEROM, but whatsoever praise is given to the Mother, it all redounds to the Son," St. Jer. Ep. ad Eustochiam. Our devotion, then, to the Blessed Virgin, rather contributes to

to strengthen our faith in CHRIST, because, on this the other has an essential dependance.

HENCE it has been observed, at all times, that the greatest Lights of the Church, and Champions for CHRIST, have been professed advocates for the Blessed Virgin. On the other hand, the enemies of the Church, and of CHRIST, have been avowed enemies of MARY; and there never were any Heretics, the Collyridians, a set of delirious women of Thrace, excepted, whose mad blasphemy the Catholic Church utterly abhors, but, directly, or indirectly, were adversaries to her name, and impugnors of her memory.

OUR confidence in the Blessed Virgin's Intercession is much less a diminution of our hopes and dependance on CHRIST, because our trust on the one and the other, as has been said, is specifically different; *viz.* as of Intercessor and Redeemer; so that we apply to the Mother only as a means to attain an easier access to the Son, and to secure a participation of his infinite Merits and Sufferings, thro' her powerful interest.

AND, lastly, a devoted attachment to the Blessed Virgin's service is so far from being an obstruction to the observance of Divine Precepts, and the practice of Evangelical virtues ordained and recommended by CHRIST, that it is manifestly a help to these desirable and necessary purposes, and a spur to the execution of substantial duties. The principal Festivals, and most solemn Devotions instituted in her honour, have a relation to some circumstance of the Incarnation, and of our Redemption. Of the first are the Feasts of her Annunciation, Purification, &c. Among the instances of the second is the Devotion of the Rosary, which is a commemoration of all the doleful and joyful Mysteries: The Association for obtaining a happy death, another; the design and drift whereof is to promote a pious and assured confidence in the merits of our dying Saviour, thro' the powerful intercession of his dolorous Mother, towards procuring us the happy passage.

sage (it so much interests us to wish for) out of time into eternity.

THE other associations and confraternities, erected in her honour, approved and confirmed by the Church, are so many particular nurseries of all kind of virtue; where a true and solid piety is inculcated: the practice of a stricter discipline, and the advancement of the cause of God and Religion, is solely attended to. And it is remarkable, that among all the Sons of the Catholic Church, there are none who are tied down to stricter regulations, and are bound to act more conformably to the precepts of CHRIST, and the rules of the Gospel, than the members of those several associations and institutes erected and dedicated in the Blessed Virgin's name.

THESE observations I apprehend, clear up the singular attachment, the Catholic Church professes to the Blessed Virgin's memory, beyond cavil or reply, and vindicate it fully from all the odious aspersions and groundless impeachments of her virulent enemies.

AND now, in order to give my reader the sum and substance of our present defence of this rightful and truly laudable cause, in one single view, I beg leave to close it with a short recapitulation of the whole.

THE rule then, aforesettled for our addresses, whether of honour or supplication to this Favourite of Heaven, is our warrant and direction,—to wit, Almighty God himself vouchsafed to honour the Blessed Virgin: this we look upon as an intimation to us of it's being his Divine Will, that we should honour and respect her, and becomes itself alone, both a reason that justifies, and a law injoining us this conduct, not only relatively to the Blessed Virgin, but to every creature, who is known to have been the peculiar object of the Divine regard, according to that of the Apostle, Rom. xiii. 9. *Honour to whom honour is due.* Again, Almighty God has distinguished the Mother of the Word Incarnate with extraordinary and singular marks
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of his honour and favour, above every creature whatsoever, whether man or Angel: from hence all the regard we can show her, within the condition of a Creature, and so as not to intrench on the Divine Worship, derives it's sanction; must be deemed to be recommended to us from the Almighty himself; and therefore as Dr. Pearson, aforecited, has avowed, becomes her indisputable right. From these solid considerations arise our elevated idea of her superior and unparalleled prerogatives; on this foundation we pay a profound regard to her memory: we become earnest supplicants for her prayers, and upon a well grounded belief of her transcendant Charity, which renders her willing to serve us; and of her great power in Heaven, which enables her to serve us, we repose an assured confidence in her interest at the throne of Mercy, yet barely, as a Mediatrix of intercession for us: which therefore we think intirely regular, no ways derogatory to the supreme homage, that is due to God alone, nor injurious to CHRIST, as our Mediator of Redemption.

LET then her adversaries attempt to discredit her as much as they please; their calumnies can be no prejudice to the Blessed Virgin's cause; their inveterate spleen, affected dissingenuity, and studied cavils, shall only contribute to stimulate the zeal of every true son of the Catholic Church, and faithful client of the Blessed Virgin, to undertake her defence with more vigour, to assert her rightful prerogatives against every opponent, and to repose an undoubted confidence in her powerful patronage. Therefore, in the supplication of the Church, we will incessantly call upon her to be aiding to us in our necessities.—“To thy help (that is to your patronage and intercession) we have recourse, Oh! Mother of God.” With the Church also we will daily request, that she will deign to accept from us (sinners as we are) her just encomiums and praises, and enable us to fight her battles against the

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opponents

oppugners of her Blessed name—*Vouchsafe me to praise thee, Ob! sacred Virgin; give me force against thine enemies.* Thus powerfully seconded, we doubt not to see the zeal of the Catholic Church, for the Blessed Virgin's honour, prevail, in spite of malice and calumny: to hear MARY for ever Blessed, as she herself has prophesied, through all generations; her cause every where triumphant; her clients rejoiced thereat, and fully comforted, and her enemies confounded.

C H A P. VII.

The Catholic article of faith, concerning the lawfulness of venerating the Saints Relicks, and their Pictures and Images considered.

ANOTHER part of the Catholic Worship, relatively understood, according to the explanations and restrictions hereafter mentioned, is the veneration of the Relicks of Saints, and of their Pictures and Images, and is only a corollary to the precedent Article of the Veneration and Invocation of the Saints themselves. For if a respective honour be lawfully given to them, and is their undoubted due, (which is what we have evinced in the foregoing controversy) a relative respect payable to their Relicks and to the pious memorials of their persons and virtuous actions, seems but to follow from it as a natural consequence from its premises; and, as a type, is to be respected for the sake of its original. And there are instances to be produced from human and domestic life in support of this practice.

THUS it is customary for a person to cherish the dear remains of a deceased parent or friend, and he willingly retains a picture, or any thing that is a revival of his memory. Yet as agreeable as the Catholic practice of respecting the pious emblems of the Saints, is to good sense and general usage, in these
 similar

similar occurrences of common life, it is one of the principal articles of impeachment, which our adversaries affect to lodge against the Catholic Church, under the odious denominations of the fopperies of Popery and a superstitious worship. And, indeed, was our Doctrine in this, as well as in other points, to stand or fall by their misrepresentations of it, it might come within their indictment: but, if truth be to prevail, we flatter ourselves to be as far out of the reach of it, and in as little danger of suffering from their cavils and slanders in this, as in any other point of the Catholic Faith.

BUT, before we set forth the genuine belief of the Church on this head, and say what it is, it may be proper to declare what it is not, and to protest against our adversaries misrepresentations of it.

THEREFORE, first, we declare that we do not acknowledge any intrinsic virtue inherent to the Relicks of the Saints, much less to their Pictures and Images, as is by our adversaries ridiculously and wrongfully supposed, or rather maliciously imposed upon us,

SECONDLY, we deny and abjure any honour absolutely due to them in themselves; and therefore the charge of idolatry or superstition, which can only result from a worship thus circumstanced, is unjust, false, and scandalous.

WHAT then, we believe and maintain in this point, is, that there is a relative honour due to the Saints Relicks and Pictures; that is, an honour directed to the Saints themselves, respecting, as I said before, the type for the sake of the original, and ultimately terminating in Almighty God, and centring in him, according to the doctrine of the Church, sufficiently declared and explained in the foregoing controversy.

IN this limited and relative sense we hold the Catholic tenet of the Veneration of the Saints Relicks, and of their Pictures and Images, to be

FIRST, Nothing against Scripture, nor forbid by the Divine Precepts.

SECONDLY, That there are many precedents from the Revealed Writings to justify it.

THIRDLY That, much less is it repugnant to good sense and reason.

AND lastly, That it is a worship, authorised and warranted by the practice of the primitive ages of the Church.

FOR the sake of method and perspicuity, we will discuss the two members of this article (*the Veneration of Relicks and Pictures*) severally, beginning with the first.

SECTION I.

The Veneration of the Relicks of the Saints is not contrary to the Word of GOD, nor to reason; and has the warrant of antiquity, or primitive practice, to plead for it.

POSSESSION is said to comprehend eleven points of the Law; because it is admitted to give a prescriptive right to any tenure, barring a prior title made clear and indisputable. In virtue of this prescriptive right, the practice of the *Veneration of Relicks*, among the rest of the articles of the Catholic Church, contested by our adversaries, ought to subsist; and the lawfulness of it be allowed, unless just cause why it should be laid aside, can be produced; such as is clear Scripture against it, or manifest inconveniences appearing to result from the practice. And, that our adversaries have failed in these several pleas, is what I now take upon me to prove.

THEY, indeed, pretend to conclude a Divine forbiddance of the *Veneration of Relicks*, from a supposed reproof our blessed Saviour gave the Scribes and Pharisees, for building and adorning Sepulchres to the memory of their Prophets, Matt. xxiii. But it is evident from the drift of the whole chapter, that it was not

not the specific act of paying honour to the monuments of those deceased faithful servants of God, which our blessed Lord found blameable, but the hypocritical disposition and corruption of their hearts, accompanying this outward show of devotion, which he inveighed against and reprov'd : *to wit*, they affected to honour the memory of their Prophets, and to celebrate their courageous sufferings in defence of Truth, at the same time that they were actually opposing themselves to the Fountain of Truth, and were transcribing the deeds of the enemies of Truth into their own lives, by treading closely in their footsteps, by persecuting with a similar inveteracy and hatred, the Lord of Prophets : and therefore our Blessed Lord immediately prophetically added, *And do you also fill up the measure of your fathers iniquity.* This counterfeit devotion then, and mistaken religion, our Blessed Saviour justly condemns, and so does every true member of the Catholic Church ; which cannot any way prejudice a well ordered *Veneration of the Relicks of the Saints*, in the manner it is espoused by the Catholic Church ; consisting in a due honour and respect paid to their memories : a commemoration of their virtues and glorious actions while on earth, and a pious emulation of them, and a desire of imitating them ; to which desirable purposes, the sight of these holy remains of the Saints serve as a memorial, and as a spur and incentive.

THE Reformers pretend to discover another implicit forbiddance of the Catholic practice, from the providential concealment of Moses's body from the Jews, after his decease. But it is incumbent upon them, in order to give weight to this fact, so as to render it serviceable to their purpose, to make it appear to have been designed, either as a divine disapprobation of *any degree of religious honour*, to be given to this Prophet's body ; or if directly intended to prevent a Divine Worship, they must prove in this particular, the Catholic

Catholic practice to be such. But, we apprehend both horns of this dilemma to be faulty, or too short to reach us. And, first, that the fact was not designed as a token of Almighty God's disapprobation of *every kind of religious honour*, but barely to prevent a *Divine Worship*, is evident from several circumstances.

THE superlative superstition of the people of Israel, and their violent propension to idolatry, is to be gathered from almost every page of the Sacred History. This supposed, there was an apparent and imminent danger, if the remains of that great Lawgiver had continued among them, that the remembrance of his wonderful actions, and a false respect, or a mistaken gratitude, might have attracted to him divine honours from this self-blinded, wilful people: The body being translated, by the ministry of Angels, to an unknown place, this mischief was effectually prevented,

ST. JUDE, in his Catholic Epistle, does not obscurely insinuate this presumption, hinting at a contention between St. MICHAEL and Satan, about this great Prophet's body: the latter, being earnest to have it within knowledge and view to the people of Israel, as an occasion to them, and object of idolatry; the other, as has been said, by the divine appointment, transferring it out of sight or knowlege, to prevent this great evil.

BUT no evil or irregularity of this nature can, with any colour of truth or justice, be charged on the Catholic practice of venerating the Relicks of Saints. We do not even venerate the Saints themselves, but with an honour barely religious, of an inferior nature, much less their ashes or their relicks; therefore, as I just said, neither horn of the dilemma reaches us, nor does any hurt to the Catholic cause: and this objection, on the whole, is as inconclusive as the former.

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BUT while our adversaries are utterly destitute of arguments from Scripture against this Catholic practice, we flatter ourselves to be able to produce incontestable precedents, from the Sacred History, in defence of it.

IN the Book of Kings, c. xiii. v. 21. we read of a dead man raised to life by being placed contiguous to the bones of the Prophet ELISHA. In the Acts of the Apostles, c. xix. v. 12. we are informed that handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched the body of St. PAUL, were operative of wonderful cures among the sick, and were efficacious in expelling evil spirits from possessed persons: therefore the dead remains of ELISHA, and the aprons and handkerchiefs which had touched St. PAUL, were, certainly, to those persons who had received benefit from them, and to others who might have been desirous of partaking of the like benefit, objects of respect and veneration: and, by their making use of them in order to procure the wanted relief, 'tis plain that they entertained a trust of their being, by the will of God, conducive to this desirable effect. And whereas Almighty God blessed their pious faith with present and most miraculous cures, he thereby shewed he approved of it.

I CANNOT pass over, in silence, one memorable instance; which, tho' not referring to the Relicks of God's servants, but to those of his Blessed Son, CHRIST himself, is equally pertinent to our subject, and conclusive; since both the Relicks of CHRIST himself, as well as those of the Saints, are equally excluded by the Reformers from being the object of religious worship; and yet, in the case we are going to consider, it has the warrant of CHRIST's express approbation.

IN the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, v. 21, &c. we read of a woman, who, having been afflicted some years with a bloody flux; when the stubbornness of her distemper had baffled all the endeavours of human art; animated by the fame of the miraculous cures
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our Blessed Saviour had wrought, she resolved to have recourse to this Divine Physician; she accordingly gave a diligent look out for him: she meets him in the public streets, and tho' surrounded with such a throng of people, that she despaired of getting free access to his person, yet, full of faith, she said within herself, *If I shall but touch his garment, I shall be healed*, Matt. ix. 21. She accordingly made her way through the crowd; she did touch his garment, and what was the consequence? Did our Blessed Saviour reprove her for indulging an idle fancy, or a superstitious credulity? No, he turned to her, and said, *Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole*, Ibid. ver. 22. and effectually, in that instant, as the Evangelist informs us, virtue flowed from him, and the infirm party found herself most miraculously and perfectly cured.

Now, in consequence to this scriptural and undeniable fact, I beg leave to put one plain question: Had this same woman, or any other labouring under a like lingering disorder, when our Blessed Saviour was raised up on the Cross, or when laid even in the Sepulchre, (there being no possible access to his sacred Person) had, I say, she said then, as she did on this other occasion, *If I can but get to touch his garment, lying at the foot of the Cross, I doubt not but I shall be healed*; would such an inward persuasion within herself have been more irregular, presumptuous, or reprobable in this, than it was in the prior circumstances? In the first we have heard our Blessed Saviour giving his approbation of the woman's faith, and rewarding it with a present cure: the faith in both cases would have been specifically the same, grounded on a stedfast belief of a divine virtue flowing from CHRIST's Person, tho' communicated by the means of a bare touch of his garment; therefore we must conclude, that the faith in both one and the other would have been equally lawful and commendable.

THIS example makes good the third proof I undertook to produce in favour of the Catholic practice, it's reasonableness and agreeableness to good sense; which, however, are further enforced from the following reflections.

AND, first, with regard to those things which appertained to CHRIST's Person, as his Cloaths; or which had any relation to him, as the Cross, Nails, and other instruments of his sacred Passion; whether considered as the material cause of our Redemption, resulting from them, or as memorials of that ineffable mercy; it surely cannot be deemed repugnant to good sense or reason, to pay a relative honour to them, under that consideration; according to the explanations and meaning so often settled and repeated; at least I am confident it is highly agreeable to pious sense, and becoming every one to set an inestimable value on them, being thus sanctified by CHRIST's sacred Person, at this ever memorable time.

SECONDLY, As to the Relicks of the Saints, the Martyrs, Penitents, Confessors, and the Servants of GOD of every class, distinguished by their eminent virtues, what are they else but so many trophies of the glorious victories they gained over the Flesh, the World, and the Devil; and so many incentives to trace their footsteps, and to emulate their heroic achievements? Under the first view, they become the objects of our admiration and pious contemplations; in the other, they are productive of the most desirable advantage to us, by stimulating and forming us to the practice of every Christian virtue: in both respects the devotion is perfectly consonant to good sense, profitable and commendable.

IF we look on the Saints in another light, *viz.* in as much as they were, during their mortal pilgrimage on earth, the living temples of the HOLY GHOST, in whom he deigned to inhabit, and to honour them with his special Presence, by his sanctifying Grace. If

we view them again, in the close of their career, becoming devoted victims to the cause of God and his Church, by laying down their lives in the defence of it. If, lastly, we contemplate them as now arrived into the port of rest from all their labours and sufferings, and their souls, the better part of their human fabrick, in actual possession of an everlasting, unperishable crown, the just reward of their faithful services: these are so many reasons to justify, and motives to recommend to us a respective veneration of their bodies, their other part, which having been individual companions in all the conflicts, hardships and sufferings of human life, are doomed to be, at the Resurrection, sharers and copartners in Glory.

GOD required of MOSES and JOSHUA, *Exod. iii. Jos. v.* to pull off their shoes out of respect to the ground they stood upon, being sanctified by his own presence, or that of his Angels. Why therefore may not we—why should not we rather pay a similar respect to the sacred dust and ashes of the Saints bodies, in which Almighty God had taken, heretofore, such a singular complacency, and had sanctified by the special presence of his holy grace? add to these rational presumptions, in behalf of the Catholic practice, that Almighty God has testified by the miracles above recited, and others we shall have occasion of mentioning hereafter, wrought by virtue of these precious remains of his faithful servants, how agreeable it is to his Divine Majesty that we should pay a relative respect to them.

In effect, all these reasons appeared so cogent and conclusive to the primitive Fathers of the Church, for the Veneration of Relicks, that, when VIGILANTIUS, an Heresiarch of the fourth century, presumed to decry the holy practice, the attempt was received by the whole Church with the utmost detestation and abhorrence, and anathematised as an audacious innovation, till then unheard of.

ST. JEROM particularly distinguished himself, in defence of the Catholic practice, against this upstart oppugner of it. His own words will best declare his real sentiments, and sincere regard for one, and his abhorrence of the other. "VIGILANTIUS, *says he,* fights with the unclean spirit, against the Spirit of CHRIST, by asserting that the tombs of Martyrs are not to be revered." Lib. cont. Vigilant. And again, "The Devils, with which VIGILANTIUS is possessed, roar at the Relicks, and confess they cannot bear the presence of the Martyrs—all the Bishops in the world are against him." Lib. cont. Vigilant. And, in the fifty-third epistle, he writes thus—"You tell me that VIGILANTUS vomits once more his poison against the Relicks of Martyrs; calling us dust-worshipers, and idolaters; for worshipping dead mens bones. O unhappy Man! who can never be sufficiently lamented."

FROM what this holy Father has said, in the management of this controversy with his antagonist, there occur two obvious remarks—First, that what were the sentiments of VIGILANTIUS on the subject of Veneration of Relicks, which St. JEROM anathematized as heretical, and treated with the utmost indignation, are the identical sentiments and opinion of the Reformers at this present time.

SECONDLY, that what this holy Father opposed to them then, as the unanimous and orthodox doctrine of the Church, is the same which the Catholic Church makes profession of and teaches now: therefore, St. JEROM being our judge, we are cleared, our enemies condemned, the Catholic Doctrine declared the Doctrine of the whole Church at that early time of day, ("all the Bishops in the world are against him," St. JEROM above) and the opposition censured and anathematized as heretical. After so ample and explicit a testimony, I might spare myself the trouble of quoting any of this primitive Father's cotemporaries.

THAT the sentiments of St. AMBROSE, and St. AUSTIN, were entirely conformable to his, will appear hereafter, from the recital of miracles, which we shall have occasion of quoting from them, to have been wrought by virtue of the Saints Relicks, which they declare themselves to have been eye-witnesses of.

HOWEVER, THEODORET, a Greek Father of the same age, is so explicit on the subject, that I cannot forbear closing with him these venerable testimonies. "Cities and villages," says he, "dividing among themselves the bodies of the Martyrs, esteem them their guardians, and the protectors and physicians both of their souls and bodies—for, though the body be divided, the blessing is not; but is bountifully distributed according to the faith with which it is approached." Theod. lib. 8. cont. Græc. T. 4. 597, 594.

THIS, now, is so full an attestation of the Catholic practice subsisting in those early times, that no stronger proof can be expected. If need, I could trace it from the Apostles; but what, for brevity's sake, I pass over, the curious reader may, for his further satisfaction, meet with, in a full magazine of testimonies in every controvertist who has treated professedly on the subject; or if he chuses to go higher, he need but consult the learned Greek Ecclesiastical Historian, EUSEBIUS, of the fourth century, where he will be informed among other instances, how the sacred bones and ashes of the holy Martyrs, IGNATIUS, and POLYCARP, disciples of the Apostles themselves, were treasured up, and a religious honour paid to them by their respective Churches and Congregations.

BUT, as solicitous as we have been, to prove antiquity on our side, in the present debate, yet we still have made no advance towards confuting a modern skeptic, and those of his way of thinking, who avowing their sentiments, are pleased to reject their evidence; unless we can shew just reason, why it should be admitted.

IN order to make good this plea, I must be obliged to trespass on my reader with another section on the present subject.

SECTION II.

A prosecution of the subject, with a vindication of the primitive Fathers, as vouchers to this, and every Catholic Doctrine—occasioned from a late writer calling their credit in question, and rejecting their evidence.

AS we have been free of our citations from the primitive Fathers, both in the present and the preceding controversies, in support of the Catholic side of the question; it might be wondered at, if I were to take no notice of the exceptions, a modern skeptic has made to these venerable evidences.

THIS was the late Dr. Conyers Middleton, who in his *Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers*, leaving the beaten track of his friends, of contesting the antiquity of the Catholic Tenets, Rites, and practices, has gone another way to impugn them, which is, to invalidate the testimonies of their most ancient vouchers.

OUR Tenets, &c. he allows to be of long standing: the Fathers of those primitive ages, he acknowledges to have been abettors of the respective Tenets, &c. St. CHRYSOSTOM, JEROM, AUSTIN, by name, whom he frankly confesses to have taught, practised, and recommended several Dogmas and Rites, now Popish, and rejected by Protestants as Unscriptural, Superstitious and Idolatrous. *Postscr. to his Protest. Antag.* He moreover owns that they produce numerous miracles in confirmation of the same. *Introd. p. 76.* But then how does he go about to justify his rejecting Tenets, &c. confessed so ancient, and to withstand the evidence of miracles for them so well attested? 'Tis foreign to my purpose to run thro' all that the Doctor advances under the name of an argument, in support of his wild opposition; his exceptions, in general, to
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the existence of the *Miraculous Powers* in the Church, we shall have occasion of examining in its proper place, c.ix. sect. 3. his main objection, affecting the present controversy, and on which he lays a particular stress, consists of two members — the first, That the alledged miracles were brought as evidences to some Catholic Doctrine, or Institution, which he thinks, upon Reformation Principles, to be erroneous. Ibid. Among several examples, he instances it with respect to the point we have just been considering, the *Veneration of Relicks* — The second member of his objection is, the insufficiency of their vouchers — His argumentation, on behalf of the first, is to the following effect.

MIRACLES, says he, were attested to have been wrought by the means of Relicks, which gave a sanction to, and promoted the veneration which was paid to them : But this practice he thinks superstitious : Therefore the alleged miracles, in support of them, he concludes to be spurious and counterfeit. The major, or first proposition, is one of the Catholic proofs we have dwelt upon above, for the lawfulness of the practice. The minor, or second proposition, which is wholly Protestant, begs the question, because it supposes the practice to be superstitious, which is the point to be proved : and therefore the consequence inferred from it, goes also a begging, and is inconclusive.

THE same way of arguing was just as good in the mouth of the Jew and Infidel, against the Miracles of our Blessed Saviour, and of his Apostles. Our Blessed Lord urged to the Jews the signs and miracles he wrought, as evidences to his Divine Mission, or to his being their Messiah. The Jews perversely refused to acknowledge him in that capacity : and therefore, as a cover to their obstinacy, were constrained to blaspheme his miracles, overlooking the hand of God, so conspicuous in them, and imputing them to a diabolical virtue. In the same manner, afterwards, the Infidel argued against the miracles of the Apostles. The Apostolic miracles were operated in confirmation of the
Christian

Christian Law, which they preached to the Infidel nations : but many of them could not prevail on themselves to submit to the Law ; therefore were also necessitated to reject the miracles which were it's evidences, as the productions rather of magic, or a diabolical than of a Divine power.

Now whether these several argumentations, the Doctor's, against the point in question, and the Jew's and Infidel's against the miracles of CHRIST and his Apostles, are not exactly parallel, I submit to the judgment of the candid reader ; both one and the other rejecting the respective evidences upon the same grounds ; *to wit*, because they became an attestation of what they were not inclined to believe.

THE second member of the Doctor's objection to the said miracles, the pretended insufficiency of their vouchers, remains still to be examined. And to be sure, with respect to those who live at a distance of time from these evidences, that is, who come after the miracles were wrought, a further proof of the truth of them may be expected ; and this can be no other, as it is the object of human faith, than the credit of their vouchers.

THESE to the miracles of CHRIST and his Apostles, are the holy Scriptures, whose authority is admitted by Christians of all sects and denominations ; and, being believed to be of Divine Inspiration, render the Truths they deliver the objects of Divine Faith : to the miracles of succeeding ages, as they are, I say, bare objects of human faith, are the cotemporary Fathers attesting them, whose credit has been established, and never scrupled till now lately, that Dr. Middleton thought fit to call it in question ; and in order to succeed in his temerarious attempt, omitting nothing his fertile genius could devise, not even scurrility and slander, to blacken their characters and to sink their reputation. A string of injuries and abuse, which he liberally bestows upon these great Lights of the Church, in the few following extracts, out of a great many to be met with in his *Free Enquiry*, will give the reader a specimen

specimen of the Doctor's own self-sufficiency, and of his utter contempt of every one else.

He sets out, in his Preface, by telling us, that
 “ the Fathers are extremely credulous and supersti-
 “ tious, possessed with prejudices, and an enthusiastic
 “ zeal, and *scrupling no art or means by which they could*
 “ *propagate their principles.* In short, that they were
 “ of a character, from which *nothing could be expected*
 “ *that was candid and impartial* — especially where Re-
 “ ligion was the subject, which, above all other mo-
 “ tives, strengthens every bias, and *influences every*
 “ *passion of human mind.*” Pref. p. 31, 32. Can any
 thing be more derogatory to the honour of these great
 men, or more reverse to the general repute they have
 possessed in the Christian World thro’ all ages, than
 the picture of them the Doctor has here drawn? But
 it was his business to prepossess his reader against
 them in the beginning, that whatsoever indignities he
 should offer to them, in the body of his work, might
 neither surprize him, nor be disrelished: and, by the
 way, he makes as free with Religion, in the above
 extract, as he does with its faithful advocates, whilst
 he would have us believe it to be subservient to the
 worst of purposes, *viz. to inflame every passion of hu-*
man mind: that he must mean *evil passions*, the drift of
 his discourse evinces, in which he contradicts the sense
 of every good man, concerning this Divine institu-
 tion, which has always been thought to have been di-
 rected to the contrary effect, *viz. to the putting a check*
on our passions, and to bring them under subjection.

WHAT the Doctor proceeds to tell us, with a confi-
 dent assurance, in his Introduction, that the miracles
 of the fourth Age “ were either forged by the Fathers
 “ of that Age, or what they knew, at least, to be
 “ forged,” (Introduct. p. 83, 84.) is boldly said; but
 without a proof.

THE same injurious reflections, which he repeats
 afterwards, are equally arbitrary, and accompanied
 with

with a heap of incoherencies and contradictions; his words are, that the miracles of the early ages, “ were
“ mere fictions, which the pious and zealous Fathers,
“ partly from a weak credulity, partly from reasons
“ of policy, believing some to be true, and knowing
“ all to be useful, were induced to espouse and pro-
“ pagate, for the support of a righteous cause.” Ibid
p. 91. For, that a righteous cause should want its
support from such sinister methods, is impious to
imagine, and injurious to the dispensations of Provi-
dence.

AND again, that the Fathers, allowed to be pious
and zealous, should be influenced to make use of these
sinister means, is to make them the most wicked of
men, while he calls them the best: and, in short, for
piety and zeal, with policy, hypocrisy and forgery, to
be jumbled together into one character, implies a contra-
diction of such a monstrous size, as is shocking not
only to pious sense, but also to common sense.

IN the next page he uses these venerable vouchers
with no more ceremony than he had done all along,
taxing them with espousing forged miracles, with the
manifest appearance of design, trick, juggling and
contrivance. *Introduct. p. 92.*—This is the substance
of his charge; and, as they are only the same indecent
reflections, repeated over and over again, I forbear to
tire the reader’s patience, and to trespass on his piety,
with reciting them at length.

IN his postscript, in answer to his Protestant anta-
gonist, after allowing the primitive Fathers to be men
of piety and sanctity of life, the best of Christians,
distinguished by their exemplary zeal, the chief orna-
ments of the Church, &c. yet he will have them to
be subject to passions, prejudices and error; and con-
tinues still to question their veracity, and to charge
them with being guilty of invention themselves, and
of propagating known forgeries. Now if these mixed
incoherent characters are not contradictions, surely

neither truth and falshood, sanctity and impiety, nor light and darkness can be any more reputed such.

AND as for what he often repeats, of their being betrayed, through a pious credulity, into the belief of lies and forgeries, imposed upon them; allowing this to be possible, with respect to reports they received by second and third hands, yet we cannot suppose them to be so short sighted, as not to have been able to distinguish truth from falshood, in facts which they themselves were eye witnesses of; and, as they are confessed to be pious men, and zealous for the righteous cause, it was a conduct incompatible with that character to impose known falshood and wilfull inventions and forgeries of their own upon us.

So inconsistent is the Doctor, in his characteristics of these shining ornaments of the Church; obliged, every now and then, to own them to be pious, zealous and good men, at the same time that the whole design and drift of his work is to bring them into discredit, by representing them as the weakest of men; and withal, occasional cheats, and arrant hypocrites and impostors.

But I'll now instance two eminent Lights of the Church (out of numbers) to whose learning and sagacity the Doctor can make as little exception, as to their piety and probity: these are St. AMBROSE and St. AUGUSTIN; the former reciting miracles operated by the relicks of St. GERVASIUS and PROTASIUS, of which he declares himself an eye-witness. St. Amb. Ep. 5.

THE other informing us of above seventy miracles, wrought by the relicks of St. STEPHEN, within his own diocese, and consequently within his own knowledge, inspection, and examination. St. Aug. l. 22. de Civ. Dei. c. 8.

BUT, now, if these pious, learned and great men were, on these occasions, so well circumstanced, as to be enabled to become unexceptionable evidences to the

the truth of the facts they attest (as they certainly were) and, if their joint learning, sagacity and probity rendered them, otherwise, so well qualified for the task, that their veracity cannot reasonably be questioned, nor their testimony be refused; which is no more than what is due to the great repute they always possessed in the world; and what every one has allowed them, 'till Dr. Middleton's *Free Inquiry* appeared: Then, I say, from these just concessions, the following consequences directly flow, and must be admitted.

FIRST, that out of the list of the Fathers, whom the Doctor impeaches of a weak and unreasonable credulity, or of invention and forgery, these two great men, at least, have a right to be excepted — Secondly, if they merit any credit, and their testimony is to be admitted, then, the veneration of relicks must from thence be allowed to have been practised in the fourth century, and warranted even by miracles — Thirdly, that therefore (what belongs more directly to our future enquiry, c. ix. sect. 3.) in that age, miracles had not ceased in the Church; which overturns the whole system of the Doctor's opposition to the Miraculous Powers.

BUT with relation to my present subject, I, at least, humbly apprehend the preceding concessions to be a full vindication of the two Fathers, aforesaid, from the aspersions and dirt he has thrown at them all in general; and even on those it cannot stick, because, hitherto, we have had nothing but bold charges against them without proof, fraught with calumny and injury.

AND the few proofs, he does pretend to bring, which we will now examine, how weak and trivial they are, will, I apprehend, be manifest to every one divested of passion and prejudice.

He sets out by laying down a rule every one will subscribe to, viz. *That the credit the Fathers can claim, as*

evidence, must depend upon their approved judgment and veracity.

IN order, therefore, to invalidate their testimony on the first head, he alleges several exotical opinions, some of them are said to have sustained, which we reject as well as he. The greatest men have overshot themselves: But, what then? Because a contemplative man may be lost in some matter of speculation, must not he be allowed common sense in the practical occurrences of life? Or, because his understanding being limited, is liable to mistake in what is above it's comprehension; must therefore his eyes be supposed to be shut, or, being open, not able to distinguish it's objects, nor to discern truth from falsehood? Or, in a word, if he receives his information from another, may not he have the discretion to enquire into the truth of it? The Doctor would have taken it amiss that he should have been thought void of common sense, because he had the bad luck, in several points of literature, as well as Divinity, to differ in opinion from the whole learned world.

THEREFORE, in a word, St. AUSTIN, AMBROSE, JEROM, and any of the rest, might have been mistaken in a controverted point, not appertaining to faith, or not decided; or have been wholly ignorant of several modern discoveries, (such was St. AUSTIN's mistake about the Antipodes) and yet be allowed to have had the sense to distinguish truth from a cheat in the miracles they saw with their own eyes; or the discretion to make use of the means, they had in their power, of being certified about the relations they received from second or third hands: therefore, on summing up the whole, I think this great exception the Doctor makes to the Fathers judgment, comes to nothing.

His imputation to them of weakness for their belief of Necromancers, Sorcerers, and Magicians, seems to be still more precipitate and groundless, because we
gather

gather from Scripture, that such ministers of Satan were at all times in being.

HIS next exception to their evidence is upon account of their want of veracity ; and, I apprehend, not more successful than the former. This exception he grounds principally upon pretended inventions and forgeries, which he very liberally, as we have heard, charges upon them ; but without the least proof, and therefore it is quite arbitrary, and deserves no further answer.

HE, however, strengthens his weak presumptions by charging them with espousing some spurious legends for Apostolic writings, and equalling them with the authority of the Scriptures ; from whence he concludes, that they were also capable of forging miracles themselves, or of propagating known forgeries ; but how ridiculous ? Their espousing such writings (if ever they did) argues indeed, an error of judgment, and a very pardonable one, till such time as the Church had declared which Scriptures were genuine ; which apocryphal, which canonical, and which not ; but it cannot be looked upon as a forfeiture of their veracity. And, in a word, because thro' imperfect informations, and the darkness of the times, they might unwarily have mistaken one book for another, and innocently led others into the same mistake, this can be no reason to conclude that they would designedly impose upon us a counterfeit miracle for a real one, or a known falshood for truth.

YET upon these weak grounds, has the Doctor the confidence to lay his indictment against them. Those, whom the body of Christianity, of all ages, constantly respected as pillars of the Church for their knowledge and wisdom, and it's greatest ornaments for their virtue and probity ; Those, has the Doctor branded with the contemptuous characteristics of being *weak Men*, or the infamous one, of being *cheats* and *impostors*.

THE first draught of their picture, as we have seen in his Preface, is embellished with these masterly strokes

strokes of his skill in reviling ; and with lines of the same complexion he finishes their portraiture in his Postscript ; and with the same I'll conclude this specimen of his scurrility. In short, he sums up the infamous character he had given them, by telling us, *That they did not scruple to invent or propagate any fiction, how gross soever, which served to promote the interest of Christianity, or of any particular Rite or Doctrine.* Postscr. p. 158.

Now the charge, so far as it affects the holy Fathers, is only the same dirt which he had thrown at them over and over again, and as often wiped off, in the course of these short observations ; but to say, that Christianity was founded, or, at least, its cause promoted by fiction and forgery, I must further observe can be no means of advancing its credit with Deists, Infidels, and Unbelievers ; and, I am sure, is very injurious to our notion of a wise and benign Providence : yet these are the inevitable consequences of his wild notions, the dreadful consequences, if the advancement of the cause of Christianity depended on him, or was in danger of suffering from his slanders, that the whole Body of Christians would be obliged to him for. This, infine, the extremity his determined spleen against the primitive Fathers, and vain attempt to sink their credit, has drove him to. They are set forth as dotards or arrant cheats and impostors ; Christianity a juggle ; and, consequently, All who have embraced it's Law, and paid a deference to it's faithful advocates, mere dupes and bigots.

To undertake to do full justice to the honour of the Fathers, and to the cause of Christianity, against the Doctor's unnatural invasion upon it, would carry me beyond the design of this essay. In touching occasionally upon their defence, so far as was just pertinent to my present subject, it has obliged me almost to stray from it : therefore, leaving the laudable cause to better advocates, and wholly passing by the indignities

nities he offers to the memory of the martyrs, by suspecting the purity of the motives which engaged them to make the generous sacrifice, and imputing their courage, in their glorious combat, to obstinacy. Omitting the utter dislike and contempt he every-where expresses of the state of retirement, under the scornful appellation of *monkery*, and of those who had consecrated themselves therein to the Divine service; with many other flirts less pertinent to my present subject; I only beg leave to observe, from the slight sketch I have given of the Doctor's odious undertaking, that he has discovered a good share of confidence in his own judgment, to oppose it to the sense of the whole learned Christian world, since the establishment of Christianity; who always revered those monuments of antiquity, for their sagacity, integrity, and veracity: and it was a bold attempt to pretend to shake *their* authority, whom we have always looked upon as the pillars of our Church, and whom his friends would fain have arrogated to themselves for props of theirs.

THEREFORE the question between the Doctor and us, and even between him and his own friends, relatively to the three or four first centuries, and lower, is, Whether, in compliment to his single and singular judgment, the primitive Fathers are to be sent adrift, their verdict to be disregarded, and all those to be reputed dupes who have paid a deference to their authority? Or whether, in spite of the Doctor, these ancient supports of the Church may not still keep their ground, and their sagacity, integrity and veracity be relied on?

TILL this point be cleared up, I am sensible that all the testimonies we have hitherto produced from these venerable vouchers, will carry little weight with persons of the Doctor's skeptical way of thinking. But if what I have here presumed to offer, in vindication of the Fathers, be not to them satisfactory, yet, as we have to deal with others, with the generality of Protestants,

testants, who have not come into his extravagant notions, I flatter myself that what I have extracted from the primitive Fathers in support of our side of the question, in the foregoing debates, will by them, be looked upon in a more favourable light; and that what I have now offered on the present subject will be sufficient to make good the first part of my theme; *viz.* that the Catholic practice of the Veneration of the Relicks of Saints, is not contrary to Scripture, nor to any divine prohibition—that it has many precedents from Scripture in support of it—is much less repugnant to good sense and reason; and has universal antiquity to vouch for it.

SECTION III.

*The veneration of Pictures and Images justified upon the
aforesaid principles.*

AS destitute of arguments from Scripture as we have proved our adversaries to be, in support of their opposition against the first part of the Catholic Practice, it's veneration of the Relicks of Saints: they arrogate to themselves better success, from that sacred source, against the second branch of it, our Veneration of Pictures and Images. And, indeed, it cannot be denied, but that there are texts to be produced, which interpreted according to the dead letter, or being disjointed from the context and wrested to a forced meaning; or abstracted from particular circumstances, to which they relate, may seem to plead for their purpose. But, if these sacred authorities are sifted to the bottom, and are confronted with these several circumstances, to which they refer, and are viewed in their true light, we flatter ourselves that, so far from appearing to be against us, the ballance will still be on our side.

It is from the commandments that our adversaries pretend to draw their capital argument against us. In the first of these; or, according to the order of the
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commandments, as it is settled by others, in the second, it is said, *Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing or Image*, or, as the Septuagint interpret it, *Thou shalt not make to thyself an idol*, that is, an image to be to you an object of divine honour and adoration. The sequel of the commandment shews this to be the true meaning, it following immediately, and you *shall not adore them*, &c. Numerous circumstances prove this and no other to be the real design and intent of the divine injunction; the following reflections in particular confirm it, I apprehend, to a degree of evidence.

THE cause of Satan and his fellow rebel spirits fatal catastrophe, is well known to have been an inordinate desire and ambition of becoming like to the Almighty — *I will be*, said Satan, *like unto the most High* — and tho' he and his associates were instantly crushed, in the very conception of this extravagant thought, and in punishment of it even deprived of that state of bliss to which they had been created; yet, being in their nature fixed, and inflexible in their wills, and not to be diverted by the dreadful alteration of their condition, from what they had been once bent upon; the vain and extravagant ambition was still predominant, and adhered to them.

ALMIGHTY GOD had therefore no sooner made the creature man in order to succeed to their forfeited happiness, than they formed a project of soliciting him into a partnership in their revolt. To this effect they first tampered with our first Parents in Paradise, seducing them to act refractorily to the Divine Will, by a positive breach of God's command. Satan, next, pursued his favourite scheme of setting himself up for a Deity, by prevailing on the rest of ADAM's unfortunate progeny to desert their great Creator, to list under his standard, and to acknowledge him as their lord and sovereign: and yet, as monstrous as this scheme was in itself, 'tis incredible how easily deluded man was gained over to it. In every corner of the

earth an altar was raised to the infernal demon; his idol placed on it and adored. The sagacious Egyptians, the learned Grecians and Romans bent to it their knees! even those, who put in particular pretensions to knowledge, or to the science of wisdom, and took upon them to be teachers of it to others, the much-famed philosophers, were not free from the general infatuation.

THE Divine Worship, thus supplanted thro' Satan's hellish stratagems, was confined to a handful of people, whom Almighty God had selected for his own Divine service; and had, in order to ensure them to his interest, prevented with incessant and innumerable blessings, and had manifested himself to them by unheard-of prodigies: and yet, in spite of all these strong ties of fidelity, this favourite; chosen people could not be kept close to their duty: they were not wholly untainted with the epidemic infection: an unaccountable propension to the general evil, apostacy and idolatry, was found to be their predominant passion.

IN these circumstances it is not to be wondered at, it was even necessary that Almighty God, graciously vouchsafing to deliver to this his select people, a law, which was to be a sure guide to them into the paths of righteousness, should make his Divine Worship, exclusive of every thing that was incompatible with, or prejudicial to this law, the principal object of it; and that, consequently thereto, he should caution them against, and even expressly forbid them to make sculptures and every graven thing, so far as they might become a remote occasion to them of the fatal mischief, superstition and idolatry: yet that Almighty God did not lay upon them this command without restriction, is evident; because he himself, on several occasions, reversed his own law; as for instance, when (Numb. xxi. 8, 9.) he ordered a brazen serpent to be made; which, by being barely looked upon, was to become a prompt remedy to the bite of fiery serpents.

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sent by Almighty God among them in punishment of their infidelities. He also (Exod. xxv. 18.) commanded cherubs of beaten gold to be placed over the ark of the covenant, in the very Sanctuary, that is, in the place of Divine Worship.

FROM these, then, and several other instances to be met with in the Sacred History, it is plain that the Divine prohibition of sculptures and graven things was occasional, and limited; *to wit*, that they were merely forbid to be made as objects of adoration; and therefore were only as a seasonable precaution, at that time, to prevent so great an evil. Or, in a word, if any will yet insist on this part of the precept to be absolute, it was only, like the precept of the Sabbath, respectively so to the Jews, to whom their violent propension to idolatry, rendered every graven thing dangerous in it's consequence.

IT must be imputed to a like cause that the Church of CHRIST, in it's infancy, might have been more reserved in the use of sacred pictures and images, than it was afterwards; lest the new converts, scarce weaned from idolatrous worship, should have mistaken the intent and meaning of the use of them; or weak minds have taken occasion of offence and scandal at it.

THIS same reason best accounts for that act of St. EPIPHANIUS, which our adversaries lay so great a stress upon, in their opposition to the Catholic practice, of his pulling down a painted figure, or representation, hanging before a Church porch: I say, it was likely for no other reason than to remove the cause of some excess and abuse, or occasional scandal, that had happened from it. For, tho' it be a part of the Catholic Belief, that the veneration of pious pictures and images is, in itself, absolutely lawful; yet the actual use of them has been occasionally suspended, or allowed, by the Church, as she was determined to one or the other, by the different face and vicissitude of times and circumstances.

THERE was an apparent reason, upon the first foundation

dation of Christianity, whilst idolatry yet bore an almost uncontroled sway over the generality of mens minds, opinions and belief, and was in the meridian of it's empire, that all such practices, otherwise lawful and commendable in themselves, should be superseeded; which might seem to have the least alliance with or similitude to the idolatrous worship, which the propagation of the Christian Faith was to abolish. Pictures and images were objects of this kind, indifferent in themselves, but occasionally, as we have seen, of a dangerous consequence; and yet, even at that time, we find that they were not wholly disused or lain aside; witness the singular reverence which was always paid to the sign of the holy Cross, approved and encouraged by Heaven itself, when Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, was moved by a miraculous apparition in the air of this sacred ensign of our redemption, to embrace the Faith of CHRIST, and to establish it, thro' the extent of his dominions, upon the ruins of idolatry.

In process of time, when the Empire of idolatry being quite subverted, it's spirit wholly eradicated, and the use of pictures and images was no longer attended with any circumstances, perilous and prejudicial to the purity of Faith, nor injurious to the Divine Worship; when, on the other hand they were found by experience, to be a means and help to promote a solid piety, and a lively devotion; it was then that she vigorously opposed a set of counterfeited zealots for truth, really professed enemies of it, stiled *Iconoclasts*, or *Image-breakers*, who decried a pious and regular use of these helps and incentives to devotion: It was then that she enacted, by decree, in the second Council of Nice, that it was good to retain pictures and images in our Churches, not only as ornaments, but as an honourable memorial of CHRIST and his Saints, and as an aid to raise our hearts to heavenly things; and declared a relative honour, out of respect to the persons they represent, to be due to them. *Second Council. Nice, Act. 7. Council. Trent. Sess. 25.*

YET the Church, even at this critical time, according to her usual discretion and prudence, thro' the supernatural wisdom infused into her, under the immediate influence and direction of the HOLY GHOST; had the precaution to provide against any abuse of her decrees in favour of these emblems of devotion, that might be made by her own children; or any censures, aspersions, and slanders, that could be occasionally cast on them by her enemies; in signifying that she absolutely excludes from them all sort of Divine Worship: so the Council of Nice, Act 7. which the Council of Trent has set forth more explicitly, putting this article out of the reach of mistake, malice or calumny, by declaring further, "That we are not
" to believe that there is any divinity or power in them,
" for which they are to be worshipped; and that we
" are not to pray to them, nor to repose our trust and
" confidence in them." *Counc. Trent. Sess. 25.*

IN consequence to the Doctrine of the Church, thus clearly settled and expounded, it is very well known, and every child, who has learnt his Catechism, can tell you, that the honour and respect we pay to pictures and images, is purely relative; *viz.* not supposing them to contain any intrinsic virtue, or excellency in themselves; but as barely bringing to our remembrance the objects they represent, for whose sake we respect them. Thus we are admonished by St. PAUL to bend our knees at the hearing of the sacred name of JESUS, *In the name of JESUS every knee shall bow, &c.* Philip. ii. 10. Which, to the ears, is what the Crucifix may be reputed to be to the organ of sight, *viz.* an image or memorial of our Blessed Lord, and of the ineffable blessings and mercies accruing to us from his Death and Passion. This relative honour Protestants themselves dare not refuse to that sacred name: they pay the like respect to their Churches, to the Communion Table, and to the symbols of Bread and Wine. The same did the Jews heretofore to the Ark, to the Cherubs placed over it, and to the sanctuary, &c.

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And therefore to allow of a relative respect in these particular circumstances, and to judge it unwarrantable in other parrallel cases, is a conduct as unwarrantable as it is ridiculous; the result of passion, and of the spirit of contradiction and heresy.

Good sense and religion prompt us to respect, and affectionate every thing that has a relation to the objects of our love, or of our particular regard. On this consideration we respect the Picture of our sovereign Prince, of our intimate friends, and of our parents; and therefore, why should the ensigns of our Redemption, or the effigies of God's most faithful and beloved servants, and distinguished favourites, *viz.* of his Blessed Mother and the Saints, reminding us of their extraordinary virtues, and spurring us on to an imitation of them, be debarred the same tribute of honour and respect, or be excluded from our oratories of devotion? *Render to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and what is God's to God.* Matth. xxii. 21.

THE inanimate part of the Creation was made use of by the Royal Prophet, to raise up his mind to the Divine Artificer—*The Heavens*, says he, *proclaim the Glory of God*, &c. Psalm xviii. And if the handy-work of man can be conducive to the same great end, where can be the incongruity of making use of it with this pious, religious, and rational intent? certainly none at all. The inference is conclusive, and therefore the Reformers not being able to make a direct reply to it, are necessitated to play their old shuffling, elusive game upon us, of taxing the Catholic practice with excesses and abuses.

SUCH they look upon, the actions of kneeling down to these pious representations; of praying before them, and incensing them: but how ridiculously? for, dumb actions are certainly undetermined in themselves to any meaning, and are only directed to it by the inward intention: so, we kneel down to our parents, as well as to Almighty God: we beg the blessing of one and the other; the material act is the same in both cases; but
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no one will be so absurd as to say, that our petition is specifically the same, or, that our kneeling to our parents, is an act of adoration, like that to Almighty God. Words also, as well as actions, are equally liable, as I observed heretofore, ch. vi. not. 2. to an equivocal acceptance. Thus the word *adore*, which the Catholic Church makes use of, in the venerating the Cross on Good Friday, is, in itself, equivocal, and directed by the Church, on this occasion, to her own meaning; which is, that in kissing the instrument of our Redemption, we should commemorate, with a grateful thanksgiving, that infinite mercy resulting from it, respecting the sign for the thing signified, the Cross, for the sake of CHRIST who was crucified upon it.

IN the Old Testament the word *adoro* in Latin, and τὸ προσκυνεῖν in Greek, frequently occurs, in both a civil and religious sense of an inferior nature; as, in the first relation, Gen. xxiii. 7. 'tis said, *Abraham rose up, and adored [adoravit] the people of the land.* and 4 Kings c. ii. v. 15. *That the Children of the Prophets hastening to meet Elisha fell prostrate to adore him. [adoraverunt]* St. PAUL, Heb. xi. 21. relating the action of JACOB's blessing JOSEPH's Children, after the Septuagint, whose Greek Version he generally adopts, as the other Apostles, and even as CHRIST himself had done before, says, that JACOB by faith [*adoravit*] adored, *the top of JOSEPH's rod*, which in a literal and civil sense implies no more than that he respected his son in his ministerial capacity: in a prophetic sense, and by faith, as the Apostle speaks of it, means that he paid a relative honour and veneration to JOSEPH's Rod as an emblem or figure of CHRIST's Scepter and kingdom: for thus it truly became a token and proof of JACOB's Faith. But in the Protestant corrupt translation of this passage, thorough their aversion to every relative honour, saying, that *He worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff*, it becomes no such token.

Now the Catholic act of venerating the Cross is in like manner, purely relative, and though expressed also
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by the word *adore*, is as little liable to censure, but from those who, neglecting Mr. Thorndike's caution aforecited, p. 144. parag. 2. are disposed to quibble and cavil merely about words of an equivocal signification, and which equivocation, as he justly observes, is owing to the want of words.

To this act of venerating the Cross, it is however, still objected, that St. THOMAS AQUINAS gives it the name of *Latria*; and I beg leave to reply that as to the propriety of the expression, we are not bound to maintain it: nevertheless, in justice to this great man, I must add, that he himself has on other occasions explained his own meaning, and has shown it to be intirely orthodox, and Catholic; for in several parts of his learned writings, he declares this veneration to be widely distant from divine honour: *Properly*, says he, *We do not adore the Cross, but only CHRIST who is crucified*, Lect. v. on Heb. xi. And again, *It is idolatry*, says he, *when the honour due to GOD is given to Images*. ad col. 3. *lett* 1. But yet because the respect given to the Cross is referred to CHRIST himself, to whom the worship of *Latria* in the strictest signification is due, he apprehended that it came within the same denomination; the one, *viz.* That to CHRIST supreme and absolute, the other inferior and relative: in the same manner, to explain the thing by example, as though there be but one Theological virtue of charity consisting in the love of GOD above all things, yet our love of our neighbour for GOD's sake becomes a branch of the same virtue: in the first place we love GOD in himself, in the other circumstance we love him in his Image. From the whole it is evident that the meaning of this learned Doctor, is very justifiable, and be his way of speaking right or wrong, it is a mere dispute about words, which we have no need to concern ourselves with. Mr. Thorndike justly observes that the words "adoration, worship, honour, respect, or however you translate the Latin word *cultus*, are or may be equivocal, in spite of our hearts, implying, indifferently,

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“ one kind of honour to God, another to creatures ;
 “ and the cause of this equivocation, the want of
 “ words, vulgar use not having provided words pro-
 “ per to signify conceptions, which come not from
 “ common senses.” *Thornd. Epil. p. 3. p. 353.* Let
 then his squeamish brethren only vouchsafe to drop these
 verbal contests ; let a candid search after truth prevail
 over the spirit of contention and wrangling ; and they’ll
 be sensible that their scruples are groundless, and the
 bulk of their exceptions to this article weak and trifling.

HOWEVER, it is further urged, that we impute
 miracles to particular effigies and places of devotion,
 and that we resort more to one than to another ; a sup-
 posed indication of some intrinsic virtue believed to
 reside in such images or places.

IN order to answer this formidable objection, ’tis
 necessary to put the following previous question : Are
 these reputed miracles *fictitious* or *real* ? If the first,
 we detest the fraud, so soon as discovered, as much as
 the most sanguine Protestant ; if *real*, proved to be
 such and credibly attested ; ’tis plain that we impute
 no more to them than what is fact and truth ; that is,
 we believe miracles to be wrought here and there, on
 sufficient and undoubted proofs that they are wrought.

THEREFORE, acting rationally and coherently,
 wherever we see Almighty God operating in this su-
 pernatural manner, we justly look upon it as an inti-
 mation of his Divine Will and Pleasure, that he chuses
 to be honoured in these particular places rather than in
 any other ; and wherever he annexes his extraordinary
 blessings, it is reasonable, and even incumbent on us,
 there to seek for them.

THUS he chose, heretofore, to be honoured in the
Temple of Jerusalem, preferably to any other Synagogue
 or place of worship. Among the many pools of Ju-
 dea, he was pleased to distinguish that of Bethsaida,
 with his peculiar benediction. By the *brazen ser-
 pent* and *MOSES’S red* God operated many wonders ;
 for, our Blessed Saviour tells us, that the *Spirit of*

GOD *breathes where it pleases*; Jo. iii. 8. and therefore what Almighty God has done, he may do again, in annexing to such particular places of devotion, or to such individual pious figures and representations, his peculiar blessing.

BUT, notwithstanding this, we are so far from believing any intrinsic virtue to be residing in the material images themselves, that, as the brazen serpent, when in process of time it became the occasion of offence and scandal, an object of Divine Worship, was therefore broken to pieces by the King Hezekiah; so, if any image or oratory, never so famed for the miracles wrought thereat, was to become the occasion of the like abuse, the Church would not hesitate a moment to destroy it; or by some other method, effectually to suppress such a superstitious worship. For it is not, as has been often said, to an effigy, picture or statue, that we impute the miracle, or any inherent virtue, but to God alone, manifesting his omnipotent power by operations supernatural and miraculous, where and when he pleases; making use of these means to confirm and heighten our trust in him; to inflame our devotion, and to promote a true and solid piety. Therefore, in short, the direct subject of inquiry in this case is, whether, at such places of devotion, there are sufficient and undoubted proofs of these supernatural operations? an investigation which surely may be as easily come at as of any matter of fact whatsoever: these once appearing, in such a manner as to exclude all doubt or distrust of the truth of them, the Reformers have so little reason to take an occasion from thence of scandal or exception against the veneration of such emblems of piety, and places of devotion, that, on the contrary, they become a manifest token of the Divine approbation; a sanction to our conduct, and a reproof of theirs.

THUS, as I hinted above, setting passion and prejudice aside, the Catholic practice of venerating the Saints Relicks and Images, is justifiable in itself from every head; and the Reformers outcry against it equally unjustifiable,

unjustifiable, and highly injurious. For, plain Scripture, abstracting from circumstances entirely foreign to the Catholic cause, they have none to oppose to it; but we have many precedents, as you have seen above, from the Sacred Writings, in its behalf. Ancient practice, and the authority of the Church, are manifestly on our side; and reason and good sense, particularly pious sense, are avowedly subscribers to it, and its professed advocates: and, what clenches all our proofs, and puts the matter out of the reach of cavil and slander, is, that the Catholic practice has the seal of Heaven stamp'd upon it, the hand-writing of God himself; *to wit*, undeniable miracles, to justify it.

THEREFORE, on summing up the whole, it appears that an attempt towards a Reformation of this particular article, was as vain and groundless, and as direct an imposition on their deluded Profelytes, as any other part of that temerarious undertaking.

C H A P. VIII.

Concerning the Article of Purgatory.

ARCHBISHOP Tillotson, discoursing on these words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. iii. 15.—*If a man's works burn, he shall suffer loss; but himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire*; makes a great wonder that Catholics can gather from thence any insinuation of a Purgatory, or middle state of Souls.

IF the Doctor meant that we build our belief of this article of the Catholic Faith on this single text, he is either mistaken himself, or misinformed his audience; for, as we shall shew by and by, this doctrine is grounded on numerous other scriptural proofs. If he would say no more than that we think the Apostle, in this passage, plainly points at a place of temporal trial and satisfaction in the next life, we admit the charge; and luckily, we have authorities of no less

credit than St. AMBROSE, or a cotemporary, and St. AUSTIN, to back our presumption. The former, on the text in question, delivers himself as follows: "But when he says, *yet so as by fire*, he shews, indeed, he shall be saved; but yet shall suffer the punishment of fire; that being purged by fire, he may be saved and not tormented for ever, as the Infidels are, with everlasting fire." *Comment in Ep. ad Cor.* Agreeably to the sense of this Father, St. AUSTIN speaks, in different places, as follows: "With that transitory fire, whereof the Apostle said, *He shall be saved, yet so as by fire*, not capital, but little sins are purged:" *Serm. 41. de Sanctis.* And again, elsewhere, he writes thus, "Purge me, O Lord, in this life; and make me such, as I shall not need that purifying fire—*He shall be saved, yet so as by fire*: and because it is said, *He shall be saved*, this fire is contemned; yet it will be more grievous than any thing that a man can suffer in this life." *Enarr. in Psal. 37.* So positive are these great lights of the Church in their opinion of the Apostle's intimating, in the passage cited, a Purgatory, or middle state; though the Bishop, and his associates, presume to dissent from them, thinking nothing less can be concluded from this text. All he apprehends can be gathered from it, is, that the Apostle insinuates a perilous state, in which many hazard their souls, and often have a narrow escape from final perdition. He therefore looks upon the expression no more than proverbial; and even Tully himself, the Roman orator, is flourished in, to strengthen the presumption; saying, that such a one got clear from a juridical sentence impending on him, as a man, surprized with his house on fire, escapes naked out of it, *Effugit hoc judicium tanquam nudus ab incendio.* But I am yet bold to think, that all these examples and allusions are too short of weight to ballance the aforecited uncontestable authorities in support of the Catholic interpretation of the text. The Doctor's notion of a perilous state, which he would fain make the Apostle precaution his Disciples against in

in this passage, is as extraordinary as his strained construction of the text itself, *to wit*. "The toleration of incestuous marriages—communicating in idol feasts"—the doctrine of false teachers, &c. &c." Since it is strange, indeed, that the Apostle should term these barely dangerous, when surely, in their own nature, if any thing can be so, they must be judged, by every man of any religious way of thinking, to be positively criminal, and directly destructive of salvation.

HE next, by way of parallel, huddles in every material point of the Catholic Faith, controverted between the Reformed Churches and us, as the article of Infallibility, Repentance, Transubstantiation, &c. according to his usual custom, misrepresenting each article, and then drawing his own consequences from it thus misrepresented. And, whereas he must, to make his parallel adequate, admit the profession of these several articles to be merely perilous, not directly criminal; we must acknowledge the Doctor, in this respect extremely complaisant and merciful. But, however, we flatter ourselves not to stand in need of his tenderness or charity, call it by what name you please, in our favour: and, as I have already obviated his objections to the other points in the foregoing controversies, under their respective titles; the article of Purgatory, is what only remains at present to be canvassed, which I hope to make good in the following Section, upon the established foundation, on which all the other articles of the Catholic Church have been settled through this essay—Scripture, Reason, and Antiquity.

SECTION I.

Purgatory, and the Catholic practice of praying for the dead, proved from Scripture, Reason, and Antiquity.

BEFORE I proceed to our proofs of this article of the Catholic Faith, I must premise, that I do not take upon me to contend for terms or mere words, and therefore, whether the word *Purgatory* be to be met

met with in the sacred writings or no, if the thing meant by it, as understood by the Catholic Church, is there so plainly insinuated, as to be a natural sequel flowing from it's premises, I shall then flatter myself, that we have a right to challenge Scripture on our side; and therefore, that Dr. Tillotson, in disputing us this claim, is idle and trifling.

THE subsequent quotations, will, I apprehend, be sufficient to determine our difference in opinion, and I am ready to abide by their decision.

By Purgatory, then, the Catholic Church understands what it is defined and declared to be by the Council of Trent, *That there is a Purgatory; that is, a third place: and that the souls therein detained, are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but especially by the holy sacrifice of the Mass.* These, and no more, are the terms of a Catholic Communion, and our whole belief in this article. And, therefore, as to the particular opinion, of the specific qualities of this place of trial, whether it consists of fire, or of any other penalty; and as to the circumstance of its duration, they being points foreign to the integrity of our faith, we have nothing to say to them.

Now, the first part of the Council's declaration, of the existence of such a middle state of souls, or, that there is a Purgatory, is gathered from the following plain insinuations; some uttered by CHRIST himself, all of them delivered by the Inspired Writers.

FIRST, it is said, in sundry places of Holy Writ, both of the Old and New Testament, *That God will render to every one according to his works*; and, indeed, this is no more than what is agreeable to our idea of a Divine Justice, and what we expect from it, according to the dictates and lights of natural reason. This position therefore being settled, as a first principle not to be contested, comprises two things — first, *the diversity of man's deeds* — secondly, *Almighty God's equity, in rewarding them according to their deserts.*

AND,

AND, first, that mens deeds are very different, and their ends, consequently, equally different, is as evident as the diversity of their faces : some, for example, make their exit spotless and unblameable in the Divine sight : such are dying infants, who having been cleansed from original sin in the laver of baptism, were never capable of any further malice or guilt : such are, also, those, who finish their course by a most consummate act of the love of God, in sacrificing their lives for his sake by martyrdom. Such, in short, are a few others ('tis to be feared very few) whose lives are a perpetual martyrdom of penance, and one continual, as it were, uninterrupted act of the love of God. All these, therefore, being disengaged from the incumbrance of their flesh, and released from the prison of mortality, having no guilt of sin unatoned for, to obstruct their flight to the heavenly mansions, are no doubt, immediately admitted to the presence and enjoyment of God.

OTHERS there are, whose lives being a chain of sins, and a series of iniquity, and their ends impenitent, are as certainly doomed to perpetual torments, and their destiny irrevocable. And, lastly, it is also certain, that there are many others, who are neither so innocent or guiltless as those of the first class, nor yet so criminal as the second ; or, if they have been at any time frail delinquents, have had the grace to cancel the guilt of their frailties by a sincere repentance, tho' they may not have made a condign satisfaction for them to the Divine Justice ; or yet may have other failings of not so deep a die lying on their consciences ; slips of inadvertency, not exclusive of the love of God and his Divine friendship, but yet culpable in his pure eyes, before which even *the Heavens are unclean*, and being unrepented of, must, one way or other, be atoned for. How then, judging by the strict rules of equity, established by Almighty God himself, of *rendering to every one according to his deeds*, are these souls of the last character to be disposed of ? The lot of those

those of the first class, is certainly too favourable and above their deserts: the punishment inflicted on impenitent sinners, as much too severe, and absolutely incompatible with God's merciful declarations that, at whatsoever time the sinner returns to him by a sincere repentance, he should meet with forgiveness. In the mean while, if the Divine Mercy pleads for the repenting sinner's pardon, his justice sues for satisfaction; for it is further intimated, Matt. v. 25, 26. that there is a prison, and whosoever is cast into it, cannot be released 'till he has discharged his whole debt, that is, till he has given full satisfaction to the Divine Justice. *Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt not come out thence, 'till thou hast payed the last farthing.* Matt. v. 26. It is also said in the Revelations, that *Nothing unclean shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* Rev. xxi. 27. And, lastly, there is mention made of a sin, *Which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor the world to come.* Matt. xii. 32.

Now, what can all these texts mean but a Middle State of Souls, or a place of temporary punishment? how can they be reconciled to common sense and reason by any other explanation? the prison, mentioned in the first of the texts just cited, from which there is, some time or other, a release, plainly insinuates this Middle State; because it is well known, that from the infernal prison, which we call hell, there is no redemption; and it is agreeable to the laws of equity, aforesettled, that there should be such a Third Place, in which the Divine Justice might be fully satisfied.

If, again, *Nothing unclean enters into Heaven,* Rev. xxi. 27. what must become of those, who make their exit out of this mortal life, with the stain of smaller faults not wiped off; that is, not repented of; or great ones repented of, but not fully atoned for? to Heaven, 'tis plain, they cannot in that condition have admittance: Hell they are not liable to; therefore a place of temporary

porary trial, where their souls are to be purified and purged of all dross, to be fitted for Heaven, must, undoubtedly be their lot. And, lastly, if there be a sin, *Which will neither be forgiven in this life nor the next*, Matt. xii. 32. we must conclude that there be others, which are forgiven in both one life and the other; since, according to the avowed rule of speech, the exclusion of one member of a proposition is an implicit affirmation of the other, *Exclusio unius est affirmatio alterius.*

FROM this concession, which cannot be refused, the following inferences are conclusive—In Heaven a forgiveness is not wanted, because nothing sinful has admittance there—From Hell, as has been said, there is no possible pardon or redemption: therefore what the Church calls *Purgatory*, or a middle state, must be the place of satisfaction, in the texts aforesaid, alluded to: and, indeed, these sacred extracts are so plain, in terms, for the article in question, that it is surprising how even an heretical skepticism could mistake their meaning, or the most prejudiced judgment misconstrue them. But what overturns the opposition of our adversaries to this article, to all intents and purposes, is, their own weak defence of this bad cause, *viz.* the insufficiency of the arguments they pretend to bring in support of it.

THEY object first, and chiefly, that CHRIST's infinite merits and sufferings are a redundant satisfaction to the Divine Justice for the whole debt of sin: and who doubts it; they are an ample and superabundant satisfaction in themselves; but yet, in the present order and dispensation of Providence, it is certain, that they are not effectually so to us, but in conjunction with some requisite and indispensable conditions, on our side, of GOD's appointment: that is, the merits and sufferings of CHRIST, (as has been observed before, speaking of the Sacrament of Penance) radically and fully cancel the guilt of sin, but yet have not ordi-

narily their effect, but inasmuch as they are applied to us by such particular means or instruments of the Divine Institution, which towards cancelling the guilt, as has been said, are the Sacraments, accompanied by a sincere Repentance. In the failure or neglect of the position of these means, and of this repentance, grievous sins must be expiated, and the Divine Justice satisfied by the everlasting torments of Hell—*venial*, as has been proved, by a temporary punishment, which we call *Purgatory*. And also, with respect to grievous sins, cancelled by Repentance as to their guilt, but not fully discharged, as to the debt of a temporary satisfaction; they are, by the same rules of equity, to be atoned for by the like temporary pains in the next life; unless this atonement is previously supplied in this, by a further application of CHRIST's merits and sufferings, through the power lodged in the Church for this effect and purpose, as will be shewn in the next section.

It is urged again, by our adversaries, to be said in Holy Writ, that where the tree falleth, whether to the south or north, *That there it shall lie*. Eccles. xi. 3. But, supposing this text to refer to the state of a soul after death, which yet is not certain; we agree that if the soul attains to the south of eternal bliss, or to the north of perdition, that its condition will be irrevocable; yet this inviolable decree of Heaven, in these cases, cannot be looked on as a revocation of that other, equally indispensable, founded on the rules of strict justice, *Of rendering to us according to our deeds*; and therefore supposing a man to quit this mortal life in the mean between the two extreams, neither worthy to be immediately admitted to the heavenly joys, nor yet deserving an eternal punishment; the decree objected can be no bar to such an one being dealt with, by an equitable judge, according to his deserts, in those respective circumstances.

BUT was not the *good thief*, say they, who had been in all appearance a grievous sinner all his life, and effaced

effaced his guilt by a dying repentance, immediately translated to paradise, without passing through a fiery trial, or the furnace of a Purgatory? he was; and if any one else were favoured with the same extraordinary grace of a perfect repentance, to wit, his unparalleled faith, and a consummate love of God, the happy fruits of the advantageous circumstances he was providentially placed in, of being sprinkled, as it were, with the blood of his dying Saviour, God and man; I say, such an one, in the like singular and extraordinary circumstances, indued with such singular graces, might no doubt, partake of the same extraordinary privilege.

No wonder that our Blessed Redeemer, laying down his sacred life for the conversion and salvation of sinners, should, on this occasion, make a perfect conquest of this penitent sinner's heart, and carry him with him as a trophy of his victory, and as the first fruits of his death and passion, into the joys of paradise.

BUT this extraordinary case, connected with such unparalleled incidents, can, with no colour of reason, be brought as a precedent in behalf of the generality of mankind, steering within the ordinary course of Providence; nor the condition of one and the other be considered in the same advantageous light. So visibly weak and inconclusive, are the arguments of our adversaries, in their opposition to this article of the Catholic Faith. What concurs to discover the vanity of them beyond a reply, is, the cloud of authorities from universal antiquity, which appear against them in support of the Catholic cause. I'll content myself with selecting two or three of these venerable testimonies, out of a large list which are to be met with in other controvertists.

FIRST, TERTULLIAN, on that text of St. MATTHEW, *Agree with thine adversaries*, Matt. v. 25, 26. &c. argues thus — “ Seeing we understood that prison, “ which the Gospel demonstrates to be places below; “ and the utmost farthing we interpret every small “ fault,

“ fault, there to be punished by the delay of the resurrection ; *no man can doubt but the soul may pay something in the places below.*” Tert. lib. de Anim. c. 58.

ST. JEROM, in his comment on the same text, speaks thus—“ This is that, which he says, thou shall not go out of prison, *till thou pay even thy little sins.* St. Jerom. Comm. in 5 Matt.

ST. GREGORY NYSSEN has the following remarkable words—“ A man is cleansed either in this life, by prayer ; or, *after his death, by the furnace of a purging fire*—It is impossible to be partakers of the Divinity, unless *Purgatory fire* doth cleanse the soul from the spots that stick to it.” St. Greg. Nyss. Orat. pro Mort. prop. finem.

THE great St. AUSTIN is not less plain and explicit on the subject—“ It could not be said (urges this Father) that *they are neither forgiven in this life, nor in the life to come*, unless there were some, who, though they are not forgiven in this life, yet should in the life to come.” St. Austin, lib. de Civ. Dei. 21, c. 24.

BUT there is no stronger proof of the sense of antiquity, concerning a middle state of souls, than their constant practice of offering up prayers for their relief ; which is the second part of this article, afore declared by the Council of Trent ; and therefore is incumbent on me, they being correlative, to make good. For, if souls may be supposed to quit this life in such a state, as not to be enemies of God, but the objects of his love and friendship, and yet for some small infidelities, or great ones unsatisfied for, deserve to be detained for a while from the enjoyment of this centre of their love and happiness ; they are consequently as proper objects of our compassion and charity, as any of our fellow pilgrims in this earthly passage of life, lying under the scourge of Divine Justice, whom we make no difficulty of interceding for, by our prayers—and, reciprocally, it being proved that

that it has been customary to offer such suffrages for souls departed, this becomes an irrefragable token that there is a middle state, between Hell and Heaven, in which souls are capable of benefiting from our prayers, and stand in need of them.

—AND yet, so evident it is that this practice has been general and ancient, that a person must be skeptic enough to question the truth of all history, and the most authentic records, to doubt of it. It is to be traced beyond the Æra of Christianity.

THE second book of MACHABEES is my voucher, which, by the Catholic Church, is looked upon as canonical, and was received as such by the greatest lights of the primitive times, St. CYPRIAN, St. AUSTIN, and others; as well as by several General Councils. And though it should be allowed no more than an historical credit, yet it undoubtedly declares the practice of the Jewish Church, which particular our Blessed Saviour never found blamable, though he reprov'd that people for many other of their paternal traditions, as Jeremy Taylor judiciously observes.

FOR the satisfaction of my reader, I'll give him this learned Protestant Prelate's own words—"We find, " says the bishop, by the history of the MACHABEES, " that the Jews did pray and make offerings for the " dead (which also appears by other testimonies, and " by their form of prayers still extant, which they " used in the captivity)—Now it is very considerable " that, since our Blessed Saviour did reprove all the " evil doctrines and traditions of the Scribes and " Pharisees, and did argue concerning the dead and " the Resurrection, against the Sadducees, yet he spake " no word against this public practice, but left it as " he found it; which he, who came to declare to us " all the will of his Father, would not have done, if " it had not been innocent, pious, and full of charity."

Dr. Taylor, lib. 1. Proph. Sect. 20. numb. 11. p. 265.

—So this Protestant Divine; more ingenuous it seems,
in

in this article, than Dr. Tillotson and many others of his violent brethren.

THIS established practice among the Jews, of praying for the dead, is instanced in the following particular, in the second book of MACHABEES aforementioned; that JUDAS MACHABÆUS sent a sum of money to Jerusalem, to have sacrifices offered for his soldiers slain in battle, “Thinking well and religiously, “ as the text says, of the Resurrection; and because “ he considered that those who slept with piety, had an “ excellent blessing reserved for them. *It is therefore “ an holy and wholesome cogitation to pray for the dead, “ that they may be loosed from their sins.*” Machab. lib. 2. c. 12.

THAT the same practice, of praying for souls departed, was also adopted and universally used by the Church of CHRIST, is evident from innumerable testimonies of the Fathers, liturgies, and public offices of the Church, of all ages; and was reputed one of the traditions received and handed down from the Apostles. Tertullian expressly speaks of it as an usual practice in his time—“We make, says he, anniversary oblations “ for the dead,” *Tert. lib. de Coron. Mil. c. 13* and in many other places, mentions it as an accepted, established custom, of the whole Church.

AMONG the opinions of AERIUS, (an Heretic of the primitive times) taxed by St. EPIPHANIUS as erroneous, this was one that he maintained; “The prayers “ and alms of the living offered up for the deceased, “ to be of no service to them.”

ST. CHRYSOSTOM asserts this article in many places of his works; but is so explicit in the following passage, as to deserve to be quoted at length: “The dead “ says he, may be helped by prayers and supplications, and alms, and offerings; because they are not “ instituted in vain. *Let us therefore help them, for “ we have before us the expiatory sacrifice of the world. “ Therefore we ask confidently for all, and name them* “ with

“ with the Martyrs Confessors and Priests. For we
 “ are all one body, though some members be brighter
 “ than others. And it may happen that we may ob-
 “ tain a total pardon for them, by prayers, oblations,
 “ and by the Saints, who are named with them.” *St.*
Chrys. Hom. 42. in Ep. 1 ad Cor.

St. CYRIL, bishop of Jerusalem, more briefly than
 the former, but in terms not less expressive, asserts the
 practice of praying for the dead, as follows :—“ Lastly,
 “ says he, we pray for all who die amongst us ; think-
 “ ing it to be the greatest help that can be for their
 “ souls to have the holy and dreadful sacrifice of the
 “ altar offered in supplication for them.” *Catech.*
Myst. 5. p. 241.

To omit, for brevity’s sake, a cloud of other of
 these venerable authorities, I’ll compendiate them in
 the single testimony of St. AUSTIN, who certainly
 must be allowed to have spoken the sense of the whole
 Catholic Church.

THIS great Doctor then, in one place, delivers him-
 self, on this head, as follows—“ It is not to be denied,
 “ says he, but the souls of the dead are eased by the
 “ piety of their friends, when the sacrifice of the Me-
 “ diator is offered for them, and alms given in the
 “ Church,” *St. Aust. Enchirid. c. 109, 110.* In his
 172d Serm. (olem 32) de Verb. Apost. he directly, and
 almost in identical words, asserts the same doctrine—
 elsewhere he gives the following reason for the prayers
 of the living faithful being available to the deceased ;
 because there are those “ whose lives have not been
 “ altogether so bad as not to be thought worthy of
 “ such a mercy, nor altogether so good as not to need
 “ such a mercy.” *De Civ. Dei. lib. 21. c. 24.* And,
 in a word, what was the opinion of this great Doctor,
 on this head, and the belief and practice of the whole
 Church in his time, is plainly gathered from the dying
 request of his holy mother, St. MONICA, to him,
 “ That she might be remembered at the Altar,” as he
 expressly

expressly relates it in his Book of Confessions, Lib. 9. Conf. c. 13. And that it was his constant custom, and the established custom then of the Church, to solicit for, or request the prayers of the Martyrs for themselves; and as to the faithful departed, to pray for them, is clear from the following short extract, among many already cited, p. 142. par. 3. "It is the practice of the Church," says he, "which the faithful know, that when the Martyrs are named at the Altar, we pray not for them, *tho' we pray for the other souls departed*, &c. St. Aug. Sermon. 159. de verb. Apost.

AND, in a word, this customary practice of the Church, of praying for the dead, appeared to some Protestant authors, who were the most candid and unprejudiced, so well supported from antiquity, that, convicted from the evidence of truth, they could not help subscribing to it. We have had Dr. Jeremy Taylor's frank confession above.

The Translators of Mons. Du Pin acknowledge, that it was a custom among the primitive Christians (*ab antiquo*, i. e. *of old*) to pray for the souls departed, in the dreadful mysteries. St. CHRYSOSTOM, they own, plainly tells us, in his comment on the Philippians, Hom. 3. that it was decreed by the Apostles. *Du Pin*. cent. 3.

Mr. Thorndike says, "The practice of the Church of interceding for them (the dead) at the celebration of the Eucharist, is so general, and so ancient, that it cannot be thought to have come in upon imposture, but that the same aspersions will seem to take hold of the common Christianity." *Just Weight and Measures*, c. 16. p. 106. This learned Protestant in practice, as well as Dr. Barrow, Bishop of St. Asaph, in their respective epitaphs, beg the prayers of the faithful, *that they may find mercy in the day of the Lord; rest, and a happy Resurrection*. Archbishop Sheldon and Bishop Blandford's confession on this head, in acknowledging that it was their daily practice to pray

pray for the dead, is attested by the Dutcheſs of York, in the paper ſhe left behind her, declaring the motives of her conversion to the Catholic Faith.

ALTHO', not to be tedious, I paſs by numerous other Proteſtant testimonies to the ſame effect, yet I cannot ſuppreſs the frank and open confeſſion, on this head, of our modern impugner of the Miraculous Powers; who, tho' he does not, after the example of ſome of his brethren, pay that deference to antiquity as to eſpouſe our tenets, on their credit; yet he fairly gives them up to us, and owns them to be all on our ſide—St. CHRYSOSTOM, AUSTIN, JEROM, as we have heard before, he taxes, by name, with ſuſtaining ſeveral dogmas, rites, &c. which are entirely Popery; and quarrels particularly with St. JEROM for his maintaining againſt Vigilantius, a Purgatory, or Third Place; and praying for the Dead. *Dr. Middl. Free Inquir. Poſtſcr.*

After ſuch undeniable proofs, for the being of a Purgatory, and the capacity of ſouls there detained, being helped by the ſuffrages of their living friends; I ſay, after theſe proofs from Scripture and all antiquity, ſo amply confeſſed by the learnedeſt, moſt ingenuous and moderate Proteſtants; with how much more front than ſincerity, Dr. Tillotſon and his adherents could aver, that we have *neither Scripture nor antiquity on our ſide*, I ſubmit to the judgment of the candid and impartial Reader.

SECTION II.

The queſtion of Indulgences fairly ſtated, and the meaning and intent of them ſet forth in their true light, and vindicated from the miſrepresentations, raileries and calumnies of our adverſaries.

THE Archbiſhop of Canterbury, whom I have ſingled out from the reſt of our adverſaries, in the controverſy concerning Purgatory, and have fol-

lowed, step by step, thro' the whole debate; this Prelate, I say, closes his opposition to this article with a sneer, as little becoming his double character of an Archbishop and a Controvertist, as it is nothing to the purpose. But as railing and ridicule is often made use of to supply the dearth of better arguments, so it is the game the Doctor plays upon us in this present debate: for, having first condemned us without judge or jury, in asserting confidently, without any proof, *That Scripture and antiquity are against us*; he next makes merry with our imaginary defeat, telling his audience, that still, the article of Purgatory, tho' destitute of every rational support, was of too lucrative a tendency to the Church of Rome, to be easily parted with: that, in this respect she did not, indeed, come under the lash of the Apostle, *for building straw and stubble on the foundation of Christianity*, having silver and gold for it's superstructure.

I suppose the Doctor alludes, in this sneer, to the alms which pious and well-disposed persons distribute, one way or other, towards the procuring of prayers for their deceased friends and relations: but if it be true (what I flatter myself to have evinced in the last Section) that the prayers of the living are available to the faithful departed, there can certainly be no more incongruity in bestowing temporal charities in expectation of spiritual ones, in behalf of our deceased friends, since the establishment of Christianity, than of Judas Machabæus's sending a sum of money to the use^d of the Temple of Jerusalem heretofore, for the same charitable purpose. *They that serve the altar*, says St. Paul, *partake with the altar*, 1 Cor. ix. 13. — this supposed, the Doctor's jest, from this consideration, falls to the ground.

If he means to reflect on some possible abuses, which may have happened, some time or other, in the disposal of Indulgences; which he may look upon to be an appendix to the article of Purgatory; waving, or even
admitting

admitting the truth of the fact, which it is not my business, as a controvertist, to examine into: I say, that it no ways affects the merits of the cause, nor the validity of Indulgences, considered in their own intrinsic intent and meaning. There is nothing so holy but may be susceptible of abuse: the Sacraments are obnoxious to them; the Hierarchy, and the sacred character of Priesthood, have been prostituted to simoniacal practices, without any prejudice to their Divine institution: and therefore it is not what abuse may occasionally have been made of such an institution, which it is incumbent on us to answer for, but what it is in itself, which we are to regard. And with respect to the doctrine of Indulgences, which the Bishop aforesaid seems to flirt at, if abuse be separated from the right use of them; truth from falsehood and slander, and reason to take place of prejudice, we shall find that this doctrine is neither monstrous, nor odious and ridiculous, as our Reformers misrepresent it; but a Christian Truth, deduced from Scripture, consonant to good sense, and supported by antiquity.

BUT first, to place this material point in it's true light, I must premise, that the purport and meaning of an Indulgence, according to the sense and doctrine of the Catholic Church, is nothing less than what our charitable Reformers misrepresent it, of being a *licence to commit sin*, or an anticipated *pardon for sins* which hereafter may be committed. Therefore the true meaning and signification of Indulgences, and their efficacy, consists in this, *viz.* That it is a *release of the temporal penalty remaining due to sin*, after the guilt thereof, and the eternal punishment entailed on it, had been remitted in the Sacrament of Penance, or thro' a sincere and unfeigned contrition. In order to make good this position, which is the whole sum of the Catholic doctrine on this head, the following queries are to be previously cleared up, and resolved.

FIRST, Whether there be not a temporal punishment remaining due to sin, after the guilt has been cancelled by Repentance?

SECONDLY, Whether this temporary penalty is not redeemable by a further application of CHRIST's merits, as an ample fund, fit to atone for all our deficiencies?

THIRDLY, Where the power is lodged of applying this fund to us? or whether the Church is not the Treasurer appointed by CHRIST to dispose of it, according to our respective exigences?

FOURTHLY, What dispositions or conditions are required, on our side, to participate of the benefit of this treasure?

THE bare solution of these several queries; will settle, at once, the point in debate; and as this solution is obvious, I have no need of trespassing on my reader's patience, in dwelling long upon it.

THE first query, whether there be not a temporal penalty remaining due to sin, after the guilt has been cancelled by Repentance? is answered in the affirmative, from many instances gathered out of Holy Writ, and enforced from reason. We have a perpetual and undeniable proof of it in the case of original sin, which being first remitted, as to the guilt, in our first parents, (as may be piously supposed) through their sincere Repentance; yet entailed upon them a penalty as lasting as their lives; *viz.* that they should earn their bread with the sweat of their brows, in finding the earth stubborn and unwilling to yield to the labour of their hands, and in meeting with a refractory disobedience to their commands from all the irrational part of the Creation: with a train of innumerable other woes, the fatal consequence of their forfeited innocence.

THEIR unfortunate progeny have felt the same penal effects of this sin ever since, even after the guilt or stain of it is wiped off by baptism—The imbecility of infancy

infancy—sickness, and infinite infirmities annexed to that helpless state—The depravity of our minds and strange propensity to evil, felt in the years of maturity and discretion; and the variety of miseries continually hanging over our heads, and entailed on our very being, are so many pregnant proofs of this fatal truth; as they are, manifestly, the penalty and consequence of that original disorder.

WE have another irrefragable instance of this truth, in the person of King DAVID, diversly afflicted by Almighty GOD for his grievous sins of adultery and murder, after the guilt of them had been cancelled by a sincere Repentance. For, in the instant that this penitent Prince confessed his crimes, in a true humility and contrition of heart, the Prophet NATHAN declared, on the part of GOD, his forgiveness—*The Lord also*, says he, *has put away thy sin.* 2 Sam. xii. But, nevertheless, in the same breath, he proceeds to denounce to him the temporal vengeance of the Divine Justice, for the indignity offered to it by his grievous misdemeanours in a train of woes which presently ensued; as the *death of the child* unlawfully begotten—*domestic feuds and broils*; with many other evils by the Prophet foretold. Ibid. ver. 10, 11, 12, 14.

AND this conduct of Almighty GOD is so agreeable to equity and reason, that man, sinful as he is, in his acts of judicature, frequently endeavours to copy after it; it being usual for a prince, or judge, when, out of an effect of clemency, he remits any capital crime, to impose a temporary imprisonment, some public satisfaction, or a pecuniary mulct, in atonement for it.

THIS first doubt, therefore, being cleared up beyond contradiction, from the testimonies of Scripture, and the dictates of reason; and it being resolved that there is a temporary punishment due to sin, after the guilt thereof has been cancelled; the next query is, whether this debt be redeemable any other way, and the failure of a temporary satisfaction on our parts, to be supplied from

from some other fund? In answer hereto I might shew first, how that the superabundant satisfactory works of the Just are applicable to us for this effect. For, tho' every man's merit be doubtless his own, yet the *impe- tratory and satisfactory* part of his deeds are certainly communicable to others: he cannot transfer on his friend his own deserts, but he may take upon himself his debts; and therefore, tho' *every one will receive*, at God's hand, *his own reward of his labour*, 1 Cor. iii. 8. yet, as God *visits the sins of parents on their children*, Exod. xx. 5. so, he being more inclined to exhibit to us the deeds of mercy than of his justice, he often spares wicked children for the sake of vituous parents; as he forbore to divide Solomon's kingdom in his own life time, for the sake of his father David. And he that will not let a *cup of water*, given in his name, be lost, will not suffer the penitential works of the just to be bereaved of their satisfactory effect of atoning for the penalty due to sin, it being written, that *alms delivereth from all sin*, Tob. iv. 11. But then, this supposed, it is certain, that the penances of the Blessed Virgin MARY, who was by a singular privilege of Heaven *full of Grace*, and consequently without sin; of St. JOHN Baptist, who was confirmed in grace in his Mother's womb; and of many other just men recorded in Scripture, who had few or no sins of their own to be accountable for, or unatoned for, 'tis certain, I say, that the *satisfactory part* of their penitential works, by the invariable rule of God's mercy and equity, just mentioned, are applicable some other way. But still I add that, exclusive of these, the sufferings of CHRIST, alone, are confessedly such an inexhaustible treasure, as to be fit of themselves to discharge compensatively and fully our whole debts of every kind, whether of guilt or punishment, so that it will be needless to enlarge upon a point, much more to undertake to prove, what no one makes the least doubt of.

THE Reformers carry their estimation of CHRIST's merits and sufferings to such a mistaken pitch, as to suppose

suppose them absolutely satisfactory to the Divine Justice, and of immediate benefit to us, in cancelling the guilt and punishment due to sin, independently of every other condition than an internal repentance; whereas the Catholic Church thinks, that to these essential purposes it is further required, that they should be applied to us by the means and powers of CHRIST's appointment. The Sacraments, as we have shewn in another place, (vid. *Sacrament of Penance*) are these means of CHRIST's institution, towards cancelling, the guilt of sin. And, which is an answer to the third query, the Church herself we hold to be the treasurer of these mercies, and vested with the powers of distributing them amongst her penitent children (which is what we call Indulgences) for the other desirable effect, *to wit*, of paying off the remaining satisfaction due to the Divine Justice for sin, after the guilt of it is released and forgiven.

THE investiture of this power in the Church, we apprehend to be evident from the delivery CHRIST made to her of the Keys, without limitation or restriction, in the following emphatic commission: *I will give unto thee (PETER) the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Matt. xvi. 19.

THE power here given, of *binding* and *loosing* is full and illimited, without distinction of guilt or punishment: and, therefore, pursuant to this commission in full, and an unlimited power vested in the Church, we find that she, from the establishment of Christianity, exercised it from time to time, according to the exigency of causes and circumstances, in discharging Penitents, whenever there was just occasion for it, from part of the canonical penance enjoined them for their sins, as is to be proved from unexceptionable witnesses of the earliest times of the Church. Among the several councils which have declared this power to belong to her, the Council of Arles, c. 10. speaking of the
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canonical penance imposed by the Council of Nice, on those who fell in time of persecution, decrees it to be left to the discretion of their respective bishops to remit to such, a part of their penance, on their shewing signs of a sincere repentance. And Symons on Revelation, p. 84. Bale in Act. Pontif. p. 46, 47. and other Protestant authors, confess that St. Gregory the Great did also occasionally release canonical penances, and grant pardons for visiting Churches and places of devotion, and on sundry other accounts and occasions. And even long before St. Gregory's time, between the second and third century, Tertullian, *l. de pudicitia & alibi*, and St. Cyprian, *l. 3. Ep. 16, 17, 18. & Serm. de Lapsis*. make mention of the Church's practice, at the intercession of the glorious martyrs; actually laying down their lives in defence of their faith of giving pardon to those weak brethren, who through human frailty had sunk under the like trials. And tho' Tertullian in his latter days, after he had left the Church, affected to censure her tenderness for these pusillanimous combatants; yet his very blaming the practice is a voucher to the existence of it, and no more than what he himself had approved before; as is to be seen in his book *ad martyres*, when being an obedient son of the Church, he spoke without passion and prejudice. And, indeed, the Church in making use of the power she was vested with in this respect, and in her method of doing it, only copied after the example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who remitted to the incestuous Corinthian part of the penance laid upon him: both St. PAUL, on that occasion (as he expressly mentions) and the Church, now, and at all times, doing it in the Person of CHRIST, 2-Cor. ii. 10. that is, by virtue of the keys or commission received from him.

BUT, lest our adversaries may ignorantly imagine, or unfairly misrepresent the Church as making a wanton use of this power, she is intrusted with, it is to be observed, that, according to the Catholic doctrine
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in this point, she never does exercise this authority, delegated to her, without just cause; or if she did, that it would not be thought available to us, or ratified in Heaven.

It is moreover to be known, that on the part of him, on whom this favour is bestowed, there are many conditions requisite, in order to reap any benefit from it; as first, that he be absolutely in the state of Grace, and his heart so wholly disengaged from sin; as to have no actual affection or attachment to it; to which end it is always recommended and generally preredquired, that he cleanse his soul from this infection by a worthy participation of the Sacraments of Confession and Communion—with these essential preparations; are also usually joined fasting, alms, prayer and other penitential works.

So far then, is the Doctrine of Indulgences from being a licence to commit sin, or an anticipated forgiveness of future sins, as it is maliciously misrepresented by our adversaries, that, as I just said, it presupposes the soul to be purified from all actual sins that are grievous, as being destructive of Divine Grace; and even excludes every inclination and affection to sin in itself; and thereby becomes rather a means of preventing a future relapse, than an encouragement to it.

THOUGH I have been brief on the subject of Indulgences, yet I flatter myself that the little I have offered in defence of them, will be judged as much as the matter requires: that it is sufficient to clear them from the cavils and railleries of Dr. Tillotson and his associates; and that I have made good the promise I gave, of shewing it to be a doctrine so far from being odious and monstrous, as they misrepresent it, that it is, on the contrary, an Apostolic Truth, deduced from Scripture, warranted by antiquity, and perfectly consonant to good sense and reason.

C H A P. IX.

The Catholic Church is as pure in her morals as she is sound in faith; she is as holy as she is orthodox: and therefore, the pretended Reformation is also, from this head, unjustifiable.

IF I had taken upon me to go through a body of controversy, it might have been expected that I should now, or even before this, have spoken distinctly and separately, concerning the principal attributes or marks of the Church; as she is *One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, &c.* But this would have led me beyond the bounds I prescribed myself in the title of this Essay, by which I professed to treat precisely of the merits of the Reformation; or merely to inquire into the grounds of the pretence that was pleaded for a Reform, and how this pretence has been answered: and in consequence thereto, to consider the Church so far, and no further than she became it's object.

THE Church, being viewed in this light, there are only two essential points, which directly come within our notice, her *integrity of Faith*, and the *purity of her Morals*; or, *Whether she be orthodox*, and *whether she be holy*?

THESE are, indeed, so comprehensive, as to include, in some degree, her *unity*, and every other attribute; and therefore has obliged me, occasionally, to touch on some of them already, and may yet, to add more hereafter, as the matter then in hand shall require. But, I say, the *orthodoxy* of the Church, and her sanctity, are the only points I undertook to treat of *ex professo*, because they are the points in which the late innovators must pretend to have found her reprobable, in order to give at least some colour of justice to their separation from her.

THEY, in fact, endeavoured, as we have seen, to bring the integrity of her faith in question, by impeaching her of several pretended errors; the principal whereof we have examined in the foregoing controversies, and tried at the tribunal, they themselves make choice of, and appeal to, Scripture, in it's plain and obvious sense. And, I hope, the defence we have made, may be reputed, by an unprejudiced judge, to be sufficient to clear her of this indictment.

THE purity of her morals is the point next incumbent on us to inquire into, which we are ready to do, and to bring to the same bar: for the whole system of Christian Morality is, no doubt, compiled and comprehended within the New Testament. Taking, then, the New Testament for our umpire and guide, I must observe, that it points out to us two marks, by which the Church's holiness is to be assuredly known; the one signifying the means leading to it, and by which it is to be directly attained; the other supposing it, and plainly shewing it to be already acquired and fully possessed. And therefore the Church, which has these marks, must indisputably be admitted to be holy; not only, as being in the way to *Holiness*, but also, as being *actually Holy*.

THE first of these marks, signifying the means to Holiness, is a treasury of certain extraordinary virtues, or a system of morality lodged in the Church, called the *Evangelical Counsels*; which contain the summit of perfection; *perpetual chastity*, or *celibacy*; *voluntary poverty*; *self-denial*; the several degrees of humility, with it's supererogatory acts, and the rest: virtues most assuredly recommended in the Gospel, and other parts of the New Testament.

THE mark of the second sort, supposing and indicating a previous Holiness already acquired; and not only Holiness, but integrity of Faith to be inherent to the Church possessed of this mark, is the *Power of Miracles*; because Miracles are the seal or hand-writing of God himself,

himself, who cannot set his hand to any thing but what is sanctity and truth.

Now which Church has the best claim to these several marks of Holiness, the Catholic or the Reformed, is the present question; and on the issue of it depends which Church is to be reputed most pure in her morals, most conformable to the Gospel Rule, or, in a word, Which is the Holy Church of CHRIST.

SECTION I.

The Roman Catholic Church has all the Marks or Signs of being possessed of the means leading to Holiness, according to the Standard of the Gospel; which the Reformed Churches neither have, nor dare pretend to.

OUR blessed Saviour, before he quite abolished the Mosaic Law, to make room for the more perfect Law of Grace, gradually prepared his disciples for this great event, by raising in their minds a sublime idea of the dignity of the latter, and of the distinguished superiority it had over the former. This superiority did not barely consist in the institution of the Sacraments of the New Law, (which no doubt was a very essential difference) but also in the excellency of it's morals; in a system of a perfecter discipline, and in a collection and recommendation of more eminent virtues. In a word, the Divine Precepts were equal to both Laws; but the Evangelical Counsels, peculiar to the Law of Grace, comprehend a degree of perfection, much exceeding what is to be met with in the Law of Moses. This excellency of Morals, in conjunction with the Sacraments, was, as I just said, the specific difference of one Law from the other; and the same continues to be the characteristic of the true Church of CHRIST, and it's distinction from all other Sects and Congregations whatsoever.

BUT I must observe, that, when I speak of the Evangelical Counsels as a part of the New Law, and consequently, as a characteristic, in some measure, of the true Church of CHRIST, I would not be understood to mean, that they affect, indiscriminately, each member of the Church; or that it is incumbent on every individual to observe All, or any one of the Evangelical Counsels, in the same degree of perfection; because, as St. Paul tells us, *Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.* 1 Cor. vii. 7.

BUT, what I aver, is, that the Church is the Repository of these spiritual Treasures, where, and no where else, they are to be met with: — I say, that the Church, acting by the spirit of the Gospel, recommends and encourages the practice of these means to perfection: — that, in effect, there are many within her pale, who, by the help of GOD, continually reduce them into practice; and that this is one of the marks of the Church's Holiness; and, consequently, of being the true Church of CHRIST, by possessing these means leading to Holiness.—And lastly, I aver this mark of Holiness to be proper and peculiar to the ROMAN CATHOLIC Church; and, that the Reformed Churches have no pretensions to it.

IN order to make good this last assertion, which is the principal of all, and comprises the rest, I beg leave to run thro' the list of the Evangelical Virtues and Counsels above mentioned; applying them, as we go along, to both Churches, from which it will be clear which Church lays to them the best claim.

WITHIN this list, the perfection of the virtue of Humility deserves to appear at the head, as the foundation of all the rest. Now that our Blessed Saviour recommends, both by word and example, the perfection of this Divine Virtue to all his followers, is so evident, that a man must be disposed to contest the inspiration of the Scriptures, to entertain the least doubt

doubt of it. He recommends it by example, when, being the GOD of Majesty, *he abased himself so low*, as ST. PAUL says, *as to take upon him the figure and habit of a servant*, Phil. ii. 7. in his Incarnation; when he afterwards subjected himself, for the best part of his mortal passage here on earth, to his Mother, according to the Flesh, and to his reputed Father: when his whole life was one continual act, and perfect model, of the profoundest humility; and he lastly concluded it by a consummate exercise of humility, in submitting to a most ignominious death, the death of the Cross — *He humbled himself*, says the aforesaid Apostle, *becoming obedient to death, even the death of the Cross*. Phil. ii. 8.

AND the Blessed Virgin, the faithful copy of this Divine Original, as we have seen before, when raised to the dignity of being Mother of GOD, would deem herself no better than his Handmaid — *Behold*, says she *the Handmaid of the Lord*.

OUR Blessed Lord recommends the perfection of this Evangelical virtue in words, by his repeated exhortations to his Disciples to the practice of it; bidding him, that would be great amongst them, to appear as the least: him that aspired to be Lord and Master, to deport himself as the servant; declaring the meek and humble of heart, to be truly blessed: and reproving the Scribes and Pharisees for their exorbitant pride. I refer the Reader to the Sacred Records themselves for numerous other documents of the profoundest humility. The Counsel, therefore, is certain; but now, which Church adopts it chiefly into practice, the *Roman Catholic* or *Reformed*, is to be our next inquiry.

AND, first, I dare be positive, that the Reformation can lay no claim to this Queen of Virtues, if either its origin, the principles it is grounded upon, or the characters of the Authors of it, are to be consulted. For, with regard to the latter, to single out Luther, the

the capital Reformer, for an instance; it is well known that he was so little celebrated for his humility and meekness, that the opposite vices of pride, self-esteem, and insolence, are acknowledged, from the undoubted records of the times, to have been his ruling passions. He set out by an open rebellion against his lawful superiors; he dared to oppose his own private opinions against the universal belief of the Church; that is, of the whole Catholic World; as he boasted himself, *primo solus eram!*

THERE was no degree of persons; no characters so sacred, whether Prelates, Cardinals, Popes, or Monarchs, but became the objects of his insults: even the deceased were not spared, nor did the greatest Lights of the Church escape his scorn and contempt; "Though, says he, a thousand CYPRIANS, or a thousand AUSTINS stood against me, I care not a rush—" "I don't concern myself what AMBROSE, AUSTIN, the Councils or practice of ages say." *Luth. contr. Reg. Angl. To. 2. fol. 347.* Even his own Disciples felt the effects of his arrogance, and complained of his overbearing temper. And the character his panegyrist, Archbishop Tillotson, gives him, of a bold, rough man, little corresponds to the humility and meekness, CHRIST recommends to his Disciples.

AND though his fellow Reformers, or his adherents, since, may not have gone all his lengths of a bare-faced insolence, it does not appear that they relent of his spirit, in the main; that they are less self-opinative, or more docile and submissive to their lawful superiors appointed by CHRIST.

THE fundamental principle of the Reformation, by which private judgment is made the umpire of all religious controversies, is a direct contradiction to the humble captivating of our understanding, in obedience to faith, required by the gospel rule. And, in short, humility is a virtue so little celebrated, or encouraged within the Reformed Churches, that abstracting from
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a few short persuasives to it, in the book entitled, *The Whole Duty of Man*, I do not know whether the Reformers can produce a single essay treating professedly of this virtue, or tending to display its excellency, and to enforce its practice: whereas, on the other hand, within the pale of the Catholic Church, the tracts published on this Divine Subject are innumerable; wherein the merits of humility are duly weighed, and the several degrees of it explained: where it is set before us in all its shapes, and its exercise strongly inculcated. And, effectually, the conduct of the Sons of the Catholic Church is known to be the very reverse of the Reforming members; by paying a submissive, indefinite obedience to the Church and its Pastors, which is interpreted and ridiculed, by our adversaries, as a meanness of spirit. The voluntary humiliations of particulars, engaging themselves by vow, to a special obedience to their respective superiors, in the several religious institutes within the Catholic Church, are equally known, and are so many undeniable proofs, that we adopt this Evangelical Council, both in theory and practice. Other exercises of the most heroic humility, both external and internal, are what they are continually trained up to, in these schools of religious perfection. Here they are taught to spurn the world, with its follies; to prefer the humility of the Gospel to pompous vanity; contempt to honours; and, if they meet with insults and affronts, not only to bear them patiently, but *to rejoice thereat* with the Apostles, *that they are deemed worthy to suffer contumely for CHRIST's sake.*

If virtue, wit, learning, or any endowments of nature or grace have gained them a great name, they are instructed not to be elated therewith, but to depress themselves the lower in their own judgments, the higher they may be raised in the opinion of others: in imitation of the Mother of God, the most dignified creature that ever was, and yet the most humble. And,
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lastly, they are reminded of what our Blessed Saviour has admonished us : after we have done all that can seemingly, be expected from us, and may flatter ourselves that we have reason to be satisfied with our own performances ; yet still, with regard to Almighty God, that we are *unprofitable servants*.

THESE are the principles of solid humility, which the Roman Catholic Church constantly instils into her Children, and which, by the Grace of God, she has the comfort of seeing, by some or others, daily brought into practice ; and therefore is an undoubted proof that she gives an effectual attention to that Evangelical Virtue in it's highest degree of perfection ; which the Reformers so manifestly neglect, and make so little account of.

PERPETUAL Virginitv is another Evangelical Counsel, properly such, which our adversaries cannot say but that our Blessed Saviour has singularly honoured ; first in his own sacred Humanity, being the model of purity, and purity itself :—secondly, by making choice of a Virgin for his Mother :—thirdly, by picking out, from amongst his Disciples, a Virgin for his favourite ; so that, tho' they all had a great share of his Love, yet St. John, for his purity, as St. Jerom observes, was loved preferably to the rest ; and was therefore stiled, by excellency, *the beloved Disciple*. And it is, moreover, remarkable, that whilst our Blessed Lord suffered his Divine Person to be reviled, slandered and blasphemed by his virulent enemies in every other point, he never would permit them to cast the least blemish upon his unspotted purity.

SUCH, then, being our Blessed Lord's distinguished esteem for the virtue of Virginitv, and the extraordinary complacency he took in his Virgin Mother and Virgin Disciple, it cannot be doubted but every other Virgin must be singularly agreeable to him, those who embrace upon earth a virtue which resembles them to the inhabitants of Heaven, where our

Blessed Saviour tells us, there will be no intercourse of marriages—*they shall neither marry, said he, nor be married.* Matt. xxii. 30. And, in effect, he recommends this angelical state, and applauds their choice who are so happy as to take to it; when he says, that there are those, *who make themselves Eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven*; Ibid. xix. 12. though he insinuates, at the same time, that the sublime meaning of this Counsel was above the reach of carnal understanding—*All do not take this word.* Ibid. xix. 11. But St. PAUL, the faithful interpreter of his Blessed Master's Doctrine, fully expounds it, in inculcating, expressly, the profession of Virginity: *Concerning Virgins,* says he, *a Commandment of our Lord I have not, but counsel I give* (that is, it is my advice) *art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife:* 1 Cor. vii. 25, 27. and, as an encouragement to this generous undertaking, he proposes his own example; wishing all to be as he was, to lead a single life—*But, I say to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them, if they so abide, even as I.* 1 Cor. vii. 8.

Now the Roman Catholic Church dares to boast of inheriting this Apostle's spirit, and of literally adopting his Counsel into practice; or rather the Counsel of CHRIST, repeated by him—first, by obliging the Clergy to a life of celibacy—secondly, by encouraging and confirming those numerous religious institutes, in which the state of Virginity is professed by solemn vow; the perfection of it aspired to; and, by the grace of God, faithfully complied with, by thousands of virtuous souls; of which number many from time to time, have had the resolution to seal their profession of Virginity with the effusion of their blood, rather than part with the inestimable treasure.

BUT, on the other hand, I may venture to say, that the abettors of the Reformation will not think themselves wronged nor aggrieved, to aver, that they do not practice this Evangelical Counsel, nor give any encouragement

encouragement to the practice of it. 'Tis notorious that the generality of them are of the number of those our Blessed Saviour points at, who think it an unintelligible saying, and above the strength of human weakness; and they presume to censure the Catholic Church, for the respective obligations of a single life, which she has annexed to particular states and professions within her pale.

It is equally certain, that the ringleading Reformers were as notorious for their incontinency, as for their exorbitant pride and arrogance. Each one associated to himself his female mate to further on the Evangelical work he had taken in hand: LUTHER had his faithful KATE; though both one and the other were engaged by vow to a single life: the rest of the new gospellers took care, by their leader's example, to be provided each one with his doxy; and, even to this day, if any of ours, degenerating from the sanctity of his character, falls off from us to go over to them, a wife, certainly, proves to be the case; liberty and concupiscence the spring and motive of his conscientious conversion; which has brought it into a proverbial observation, as ludicrous as it is true, that, on these occasions they always carry double. In a word, if facts are to be relied on, the Reformation is averse from the profession of virginity and a single life, both in principle and practice; and the Catholic Church in both these respects, is as conspicuously an advocate for, and abettor of this Evangelical Counsel.

AMONG the means to Salvation, a disengagement of our hearts and affections from the things of this world, that they may be more at liberty to attend to the concerns of the other, is essentially one of them; to wit, a means always conducive to it, and in many cases absolutely necessary.

AN inordinate attachment to creatures, is incompatible with the love of God above all things; there is no raising our heart to Heaven while it is fixed on

the earth: *No one*, says our Blessed Saviour, *can serve two masters*: Luke xvi. 13. the Philistines might as well have associated Dagon and the Ark on the same Altar, as we can pretend to serve God and follow the world in its corrupt principles and maxims. In this case, therefore, there is an indispensable obligation of renouncing the world first, to become in any degree acceptable to God.

BUT there is also a moderate use of creatures, which is allowable in itself, and not absolutely incompatible with our duty to God. Such is a well regulated enjoyment of innocent amusements; a temperate fruition of lawful pleasures, the possession of worldly goods and riches, saving a due regard to the obligations of charity, and a Christian oeconomy in the expending of them.

BUT though, I say, the possession of these gifts of Providence be lawful in itself, and no invincible obstacle to our eternal Salvation; yet they cannot but be deemed an incumbrance to us in our spiritual career, as many clothes are to a courser running a race; and therefore we should, certainly, be more at liberty by casting them off; we should thereby be able to serve God with less interruption, and meet with fewer rubs in our way to perfection. And to do this is clearly the Counsel, our Blessed Saviour gives us, in several parts of the Gospel.

I'LL produce one proof for all, which is, his advice to the young rich man, applying to him to be guided into the direct road to the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Blessed Lord, in compliance with his desires, first points out to him duties of obligation—*keep*, says he, *the Commandments*. But, on the young man's saying he had discharged this obligation from his youth, he counsels him next to what was perfect, *If thou wilt be perfect*, says he, *go sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor, and come, follow me*. Matt. xix. 21.

It was this poverty in effect and affection, which the Apostles practising, gave St. PETER, the confidence of saying to our Blessed Saviour, *Behold, we have left all things and followed thee; what therefore shall we have.* Matt. xxvii.

AND we gather from the Acts of the Apostles, that they pursued this disinterested conduct afterwards, being divested of all property, and *Having nothing*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. as St. PAUL avers, they could call their own, but every thing in common.

THIS course, which the Apostles entered upon, appears also to have been an engagement of the most sacred nature; because the origin of JUDAS's shameful apostacy is dated from a breach of it, by embezzeling what was allotted for the use of the community; which is insinuated by the Evangelist's saying, *He was a thief, and having the purse, carried what was in it*, John xii. 6.—for, if he had not been guilty of appropriation or embezzlement, his carrying the purse could not throw him under that imputation. The exemplar Judgment which fell upon ANNANIAS and SAPHIRA, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, was apparently in punishment of a similar infidelity.

Now, to come to the application of the premises, I say that, within the pale of the Catholic Church, this Evangelical Counsel is literally observed, and the Apostolical example strictly copied by numbers of her Children; witness the sundry religious institutes, in which a total renunciation of their worldly goods is professed; their property is given up by vow, and all things are possessed in common, according to the Apostolic spirit. Witness the many generous souls, members of the Catholic Church, who are seen to leave father and mother, their dearest friends, their native home, and a plentiful fortune, in exchange for voluntary poverty and retirement; in order to be more at liberty to attend to the service of God and their own salvation.

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AND I presume to say, that the like examples of a perfect renunciation, are so far from being to be met with, within the Reformed Churches, that, on the contrary, what is practised by us in this kind, is become the usual topic of raillery and ridicule to them; or, at best, attracts their pity on us, as a set of mistaken, deluded zealots.

To forfeit a birth-right inheritance, or the plentiful gifts of Providence, is by no means according to the plan of the Reformation. Even the ecclesiastical state, among them, is equally a stranger to such renunciations, and scarce a bar to any pleasures or possessions, compatible with a secular condition: and therefore, if such as engage in it, were equally worldly-minded as seculars themselves: if an easy living, with a large income annexed to it, should have more persuasive attractives, and a more prevailing bias on their choice, than a burthen some curacy, with slender profits, it cannot be admired at. And though they may think that, as to the capacity of enjoying temporal possessions, they can retort the charge upon the clergy of the Catholic Church; it is yet certain, that even these lie under many restrictions and obligations, which the Reformers have taken care wholly to dispense themselves with, and to throw off their shoulders.

BESIDES that, as I premised in the beginning, the Evangelical Councils are not obligatory, but only the means to a greater good, and a help to perfection; and in that light adviseable and eligible, but not equally convenient for all states and conditions; much less binding in every degree of them, and in their full extent.

IT is sufficient, for my present purpose, to have shewn that the Catholic Church professes the strictest veneration for these means to Holiness, the Evangelical Counsels; by approving and inculcating their practice; and that, with respect to the particular Counsel in question, of a voluntary poverty, or a total renunciation of
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their worldly goods, in spirit and effect, she has many among her children, who are courageous enough to put it into execution, in the highest degree of perfection. It is equally certain, that the Reformed Churches are wholly destitute of the like testimonies of their regard for the Evangelical Counsels in general, and for this we have just spoke of in particular, as well as for that which ensues.

As the sum of our strict obligation, with regard to the law of God, consists of two points, viz. *to avoid evil*, and *to do good*: so the perfection of the law is composed of two branches, *to renounce the world*, and *to deny ourselves*. By the first we give away from ourselves, our temporal goods: by the second we even make over ourselves to another. There we renounce our Property, here our Liberty, and our very Will; by one, in short, we abstain from lawful pleasures; by the other we embrace their contrary mortifications. And that this is a matter of Evangelical Counsel, is indisputable. *Deny yourself, take up your Cross, and follow me*, Matt. xvi. 24. is what our blessed Saviour is continually inculcating in almost every chapter of the Gospel: and how little heeded by the Reformers, is plain from the whole system of their pretended Evangelical Work, calculated for ease and luxury, to get to heaven with as little pains as possible, and without putting any great restraint on their passions and inclinations, for this desirable and only necessary end.

FOR instance, works of supererogation are, by them, absolutely discountenanced, and the doctrine of self-merit exploded; the ancient Fasts of the Church wholly discarded; and the spirit of Penance, preached up by St. JOHN BAPTIST, confirmed by our blessed Saviour afterwards, and repeated and inculcated over and over again by the Apostles, is lost among them, and quite lain aside.

THE Catholic Church, on the contrary, manifestly keeps up the self-denying spirit of the Gospel, by her regular Fasts, enjoined to all her faithful ; by advising and encouraging acts of mortification and self-abnegation in every shape : by her incessant exhortations to repentance, which, through the blessing of God, prove successful in reclaiming numbers from evil courses to a penitential life, but, chiefly, by the many nurseries of virtue she continually cultivates, which are fruitful of Saints of every class, and of examples of the perfectest self-denial, in a total renunciation of their will and liberty to their superiors, by the vow of obedience.

Now, for our adversaries to oppose to these unquestionable instances of solid virtue, the dissolute behaviour of a few, not living up to the sanctity of their profession ; what else can it prove, than that there is no institution so holy but is capable of being abused, and has been abused. Yet this still can be of no prejudice to the merits of the institution itself, nor to those who do live conformably to it. There was a JUDAS in the College of the Apostles, without any detriment to the Apostolic Calling.—There are many, bearing the name of Christians, who live worse than Heathens ; yet Christianity does not cease to be holy : nor, will the Catholic Church cease any more to be orthodox in her Faith, and pure in her Morals, because she has some members wavering or corrupt in their belief, and dissolute in their manners ; who deserve to be removed from her communion. To such as these the Reformation owes its first rise and establishment ; and none but such ever desert us, since that religious revolution, to incorporate with them.

BUT, in spite of all these accidental scandals, it will always be true that the Catholic Church is sound in her Faith, and pure in her Morals ; and that she pays the profoundest regard to the Evangelical Counsels, both in theory and practice. Of these consist the system of her discipline, and the beauty of her oeconomy. And they

they being the means to Holiness, appointed by CHRIST himself, it cannot be questioned but she, being possessed of them, is that Church established by him, (the repository of all his spiritual treasures) Catholic, Orthodox and Holy.

ON the other hand, though the Reformers, by virtue of their arrogated title, ought to have had these essential points at heart, and to have made it their business to restore integrity of faith, and purity of morals, supposed to have gone to decay; yet, I venture to say, from the undeniable proofs I have produced in the foregoing controversies, that the contrary fatal consequences have attended their presumptuous undertaking; that they have sapped the very foundation of religion, both in its doctrine and morals, under the specious pretence of re-establishing it; and therefore must be reputed destitute of these essential marks or characteristics, of being CHRIST's Church—Catholic, Orthodox, and Holy.

HERE it may be thought that I might very well drop my pen on this subject; but I cannot forbear subjoining a hint of another material consideration, which has a relation to what has gone before, as a mark of the Church's Holiness. The point I mean is a branch of the law of Charity, and that a principal one; The zeal of souls.

THE conversion of souls, or the bringing them to the knowledge of truth, to the embracing it, and, in consequence thereto, to a repentance for sin, was the continual object of our Blessed Lord's most ardent wishes, prayers, and labours on earth; as it was the motive and end of all the circumstances of his mysterious Incarnation, Passion, and Death: and it was the errand on which the Apostles were afterwards dispersed to the distant parts of the globe:—Go, says our Blessed Lord to them, *teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, &c.* Matt. xxviii. 19.

THE occasion of this embassy continually subsists, so long as there are Infidels in the world, or any who are ignorant of the true way to salvation; and therefore the Catholic Church has, for a succession of ages, from the Apostles time till now, cherished their spirit. Whole countries and nations, brought, from time to time, under the yoke of CHRIST, thro' the indefatigable labours of her missionaries, are undeniable testimonies to her constant and unwearied zeal of souls.

BUT I defy the Reformers on their side, to produce an instance of one single town or village, ever gained by them, or attempted to be gained, by any other than compulsive measures, and a legislative influence. And therefore, whereas the Catholic Church has indisputably inherited this Apostolic spirit, (which the Reformers are wholly strangers to) so has it pleased Almighty God, from time to time, to stamp upon it the visible marks of his sanction and approbation; by annexing to the Church the Miraculous Powers, as an aid to her Apostolic labours; as credentials to her commission, and as a manifest token or characteristic of her being his beloved spouse, the Church by him established—not only as being the repository of the Means leading to Holiness, but also, as being actually holy.

SECTION II.

The Catholic Church can prove her claim to the Miraculous Powers; the Reformed Churches have disclaimed them: therefore she has this assured mark of her Orthodoxy and actual Holiness, which they are destitute of.

WHEN we attribute to the Catholic Church the Miraculous Powers, we would not be thought to insinuate the existence of an inherent quality or cause operative at will of its effect, in the manner of the Priestly character, empowering the person vested with it, at all times, to exercise his functions, — but,
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we mean, a gratuitous and occasional gift, providentially conferred by Almighty God on his Church, according to the respective exigency of circumstances.

THE Apostles were certainly under these circumstances, when they entered upon their Apostolic ministry. For, to go about to persuade the Jews, that the Man, whom they had just before put to an ignominious death, as a notorious cheat and impostor, was really the Son of God, and their long expected Messiah; was an undertaking so hazardous in itself, and unlikely to succeed, that they stood in need of the most miraculous endowments, to gain credit to their asseverations; and to be able to overcome that peoples inflexible prejudices, which had withstood the repeated declarations and proofs thereof, given them before, by CHRIST himself.

AGAIN, in order to convince the Gentiles of the truth, reasonableness, and merits of the Christian Religion, and to bring them over from a state of licentiousness, allowed by the principles of Gentility, to the practice of the severe morality of the Gospel; the Apostles had occasion, no doubt, for a virtue, power, and efficacy divine, to accompany their exhortations. Therefore St. PAUL says, that the Gift of Tongues, which was one of their miraculous qualifications, was bestowed on them for the sake of the incredulous, and not for believers. And St. Gregory, alluding to this of the Apostle, observes, that the seed of Faith took root, and the Church of CHRIST derived it's establishment from signs and miracles. Not that he was of the opinion of our modern Reformers, that miracles had either wholly ceased then, or should at any time while the Church has a being. - For, in an epistle to St. Austin, the Apostle of England, he cautions him against motions of vanity, which might possibly arise from his being gifted with this supernatural endowment. *Vid. Ven. Bede Eccles. Hist. l. 1. c. 31.* But he only insinuates, that in the beginning of the

Church, they were more necessary, for the planting and nourishment of Faith, than they were afterwards. *St. Greg. Hom. 29. in Evang. secund. Mar. xvi.*

OUR Blessed Saviour himself enumerates to his disciples the many Signs and Miracles, which were to accompany the future propagation of his Gospel: *And these signs, says he, shall follow them that believe, &c.* Mark xvi. 17. And though this Prediction was immediately verified, in the persons of the Apostles, on their setting out upon the exercise of their Ministry; yet we dare also be positive, from incontestable proofs, that it was not limited to them alone, but extended, as we shall see presently, to future times; according to the occurrence of similar exigences of circumstances.

To my present purpose, I beg leave to observe, That the Miraculous Powers, the Apostles were endued with, had a double effect and advantage — first, with regard to themselves — and, secondly, to those they had to deal with; to be first, a moral intimation of their own personal merits and holiness; and secondly, an assured proof of the truth and sanctity of the doctrine they preached. Their miracles effectually operated this double conviction on the minds of their audience, as we may gather from the *Acts of the Apostles*; and therefore the like Powers, wherever they are met with, must be productive of the same effect; and those who acquiesce in them must be judged to act rationally and prudentially: the reason of this is, because miracles are, as it were, the hand-writing of God himself, or his Divine Seal; and the persons he makes use of to operate them, his mediate instruments. But, it is certain Almighty God cannot set his hand to falshood and unholiness; and it is equally unworthy of his infinite Wisdom, and contrary to the ordinary methods of his Divine Providence, to make use of wicked instruments, for the execution of operations, supernatural, and properly his own: and, in short, it is evident, from every part of the Inspired History, that the *Power of Miracles* has

has ever been instanced as an undoubted testimony to sanctity and truth.

THUS, without going any further for a proof, than the Gospels, we find, that it was the evidence of CHRIST's Miracles, which extorted from NICODEMUS a confession of his Divine Ministry: — *Rabbi*, said he to him, *we know thou art come a teacher from God, for no man can do these Signs thou hast done, unless God be with him.* John iii. 2. We find also, that the blind man, St. JOHN, chapter the ninth, miraculously restored by our Blessed Saviour to his sight; when invidiously questioned by the Pharisees about his cure, and solicited by them to blaspheme his Divine Physician and Benefactor; he generously disdained their suggestions; grounding his opinion of our Blessed Saviour's undoubted merits, upon his marvellous actions. *Since the world began, was it not heard,* says he, *that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind; if this man were not of God, he could do nothing.* John ix. 32. And, even our Blessed Saviour himself instanced the miracles he had wrought, as an irrefragable testimony to his Divinity, and to the truth and holiness of his doctrine; and moreover enforced them as an unpardonable aggravation of the guilt of that perverse, obstinate disbelieving people: — *If I had not,* says he, *done the works which no man ever did, they had not had sin among them.* John xv. 24. And lastly, to St. JOHN BAPTIST, sending to him to know whether he were the Messiah: — *Art thou he that is to come, or look we for another,* Matt. xi. 3. — Our Blessed Lord returned no other answer than the testimony of the wonderful works he wrought — *Tell JOHN*, said he to the messengers, *that the blind see, the lame walk.* Matt. xi. 4, 5. — What therefore the Miraculous Powers were to CHRIST, viz. a testimony of his divinity — what they were to the Apostles, viz. credentials to their ministry; — that they must, in a respective capacity, be reputed to be to that Church in which they are at any time found to be lodged, viz. a certain token
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of the integrity of her Faith and doctrine, and of the purity of her morals. And our Blessed Saviour himself does not obscurely insinuate this, in many parts of the Gospels; that the true believers in him, that is, his Church, should be distinguished and known by these characteristics.

IN one place he tells us, that they should be vested with the power of working miracles as great, and greater, than what he himself had wrought — *He that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he also do.* John xiv. 12.

IN another place he assures us, that with a sufficient stock of faith, we should be able to move mountains (according to the occasional exigency of circumstances) and do other signs equally surprising and wonderful. Mark xi. And, in fine, in the sixteenth Chapter of St. Mark, as we have seen above, the miracles he there foretells should be wrought in future times, he assigns as a token and reward of a perfect Faith. *These signs,* says he, *shall follow them that believe,* not the unbelievers, &c. Mark xvi.

BUT now, that the Reformed Churches are wholly destitute of these assured testimonies to the truth and holiness of their Belief, does not want any proof from us; because they themselves give up, and utterly disclaim all pretensions to them: and therefore, they would fain persuade the world, that there has been an absolute cessation of Miracles in the Church for a long time before the Reformation, in order to put a better face on their total want of them.

THIS was the language no less of the first Authors of the pretended Reformation, than it has been of the Abettors of it ever since; tho', certainly, if ever there was an exigency of this supernatural gift at the Divine Hands (the Miraculous Powers) it was particularly wanting to those pretended Apostles, in order to gain credit to their enterprise, as important in it's own nature, as it was daring and arduous — an important undertaking,

undertaking, I say, because the pretended drift of it was nothing less than to bring the Church back to it's primitive purity, after above 800 years supposed apostacy, that the whole world, during that length of time, had plunged into the gulph of abominable errors, superstition, and idolatry; all running with the stream, till Luther (magnanimous man) dared oppose himself alone to stem the current.

THE undertaking was bold and arduous, because he entered upon it without any ordinary commission, flying in the face of his lawful superiors, and impugning his Mother Church, from whom an ordinary commission could only be derived. An extraordinary commission was therefore evidently wanting under such extraordinary circumstances, and nothing less than the Miraculous Powers could be sufficient to procure it the credit of this supernatural sanction. For, certainly, to reform a Church, supposed to be wholly corrupted, was an attempt no less arduous than it's first establishment; and standing in need of similar helps, and the same credentials, the Seal of Heaven to be plainly stamp'd upon it: and, therefore, if, on this exigent emergency, the Reformers themselves durst lay no pretensions to the Miraculous Powers, 'tis no wonder their followers have disclaimed them ever since. And, as to their allegation, of Miracles having now ceased, it is like the fable of the Fox crying the Grapes were sour, because he could not get at them. In a word, the Reformers would impose their work upon us as Godly and Evangelical: they would have us believe it to have been begun and conducted by Divine Inspiration, but want their proper credentials to prove their mission, and to warrant their pretensions.

BUT, while they are thus utterly destitute of these assured tokens, assigned by CHRIST himself, of being the true believers, we flatter ourselves, if authentic records, and the testimonies of the Primitive Fathers, deserve

deserve any credit, that we can make good the Catholic Church's undoubted claim to them.

AMONG the rest of our proofs, I reckon the Miracles transmitted to us from the unquestionable authorities of cotemporary Fathers, wrought by St. Gregory, Bishop of Cæsarea, who lived about the third Century; and, for the number, variety, and stupendousness of the prodigies it pleased Almighty God to operate through his means, was called *Thaumaturgus*, or, the *Wonder-worker*; and was compared in this respect to Moses.

ST. BASIL gives this abstracted account of them, “ That he made the Devils tremble — Rivers to “ change their course; and by his prayers, dried up a “ pool, which was the occasion of dissention between “ two avaricious brothers. He also removed a mountain to make room for the situation of a Church, “ &c. *St. Bas. lib. de Sp. Sto. c. 29.*

BESIDES this early testimony of the Miraculous Powers, which some may not therefore have so much difficulty of subscribing to, I refer the Reader to those from Theodoret, and others of a later date, quoted heretofore. *Ven. of Rel. Sect. 1.*

I shall, presently, add some, that may be also reputed modern. The evidences of St. Ambrose, and St. Austin, to Miracles, which they were eye-witnesses of themselves, you have had before, *Sect. 2. Ven. of Rel.* and therefore need not be repeated.

Now, from these venerable testimonies, and others, which, for brevity's sake, I omit, I draw the following inferences — First, that these holy Fathers were evidently in the opposite opinion to our modern Reformers, of there being a cessation of the Miraculous Powers — Secondly, that whereas, in the foregoing controversies, we have produced these Primitive Fathers as evidences to the Catholic Doctrine; the Miracles here recited, and avowed by them, must be reputed as so many testimonies to the Faith they professed;

fessed; that is, to the Faith the Catholic Church, then, and now, and always, professed—Thirdly, that whereas these, and the other Fathers, whom we have omitted, were men of undoubted credit and veracity, whose authority is admitted in other matters, both dogmatical and historical; there can be no reason shewn why they should not be equally believed in the present relations of the existence of the Miraculous Powers in the Church, and of their being, on occasions, actually exerted; to some whereof they declare themselves to have been ocular witnesses: I say, there can be no reason why they should not deserve, in this point, the credit of an historical faith.

BUT then, this being granted them, the immediate and necessary consequence following from this just concession, is, that they must be believed, asserting the existence of the Miraculous Powers in the Church, preferably to a few modern Sectaries, whose manifest interest it is to discredit and deny them, because they themselves can put in no pretensions to them. They must also be believed, as I shall shew in the next Section, preferably to a skeptical critic, whose refinements, in religious matters, have too plain and direct a tendency to the sapping of the foundation of Religion itself, to carry any weight.

WHAT St. Gregory the Great's opinion was of the Miraculous Powers, we have seen above, in his letter to St. Austin, the Apostle of England. The said St. Austin's gift of Miracles is even allowed by Mr. Collier, and other Protestant Authors. *Col. Hist. Eccl.* l. 2. p. 78. And, indeed, the single memorable instance of his putting the issue of the controversy between himself and the British Bishops, to a miracle, which he wrought on the spot, in the presence of all of them (as is related at length by Venerable Bede) by restoring sight to a blind man: this one instance, I say, puts his gift of the Miraculous Powers past all doubt.

BUT, in short, to come nearer home, and to our own times, and, as it were, within our own doors and knowlege, for a proof the Miraculous Powers still subsisting, and that, within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church, I appeal to the many various and stupendous Miracles wrought by the *Thaumaturgus* of the sixteenth Century, St. Francis Xavier, late Apostle of the Indies; which are to be read in his Life, Englished by Mr. Dryden; and so well attested, that the Man who is skeptic enough to doubt the truth of them, may, with as good a front, and equal reason and justice, controvert the being of such a man and woman as Harry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth, and call in question the most remarkable historical occurrences of those memorable reigns.

AND now, if our adversaries, for their last shift, pretend to oppose to these testimonies of certain and undeniable Miracles, a few that may be doubtful, supposititious, or even counterfeit; I beg leave to say, that this plea is entirely evasive and sophistical. For—First, the integrity of Faith, and the credit of the Church, is no way concerned in, or affected by a mistaken miracle; tho', for reasons before alleged, *viz.* Miracles being the Seal or Hand-writing of God himself, it is certainly confirmed by a true one. Therefore—Secondly, a false Miracle cannot invalidate the merits and consequences of a true Miracle, known to be such. And such, I flatter myself, I have proved those to be, for which I have brought unquestionable authorities in the foregoing premises—such are those which the Church, after the most rigorous examination, and the most unquestionable attestations to the truth of them, authentically espouses; and the consequences, equally certain, flowing from them, are what I undertook to make good in the beginning of this Section, *viz.*

FIRST, That the Miraculous Powers have not ceased in the Church; but that she has, from time to time, been vested with them.

SECONDLY, that they are an assured token of the integrity of her Faith, and purity of her Morals; or, of her being the true, orthodox, and holy Church of CHRIST; and that the Reformed Churches, by not daring to put in any pretensions to the Miraculous Powers, have this negative, but strong proof, standing in full force against them, of being neither orthodox nor holy.

SECTION III.

The Church's claim to the Miraculous Powers since the Apostolic age, further confirmed and vindicated from the skeptical exceptions of the late Dr. Conyers Middleton, in his Treatise, Intituled, A Free Inquiry, &c.

OUR late pretended Reformers, being wholly destitute of the Miraculous Powers, to gain credit, as a token of an extraordinary Mission, to their temerarious enterprise; were necessitated, as we have seen in the last Section, to plead a total cessation of these supernatural virtues in the Church of God, in order to give a better grace to their want of them. But at what epoch of time to assign the period of the manifestation of these Powers, was the difficult point, in which they never yet could unanimously agree. Some limited them to the beginning of the fourth Century, when, persecution being at an end, the Gospel at liberty, and the propagation of it authorised by law, they imagined the occasion for this extraordinary aid from Heaven had ceased. Others, unable to withstand the testimony of irrefragable vouchers, to their subsisting in after times, have brought them down to the fifth and sixth Centuries; and some, as Dr. Middleton acknowledges, in his *Free Inquiry*, to the seventh Century, or even lower. Of this number is Jeremy Collier, and other candid Protestants, admitting St. Austin, the Apostle of England, to have been

endued with these Powers. Thus varying among themselves as much about these supernatural evidences to the true Faith, as about it's tenets and principles.

BUT our modern enemy to the Miraculous Powers, the Doctor, with whom we are now engaged, striking at root and branch with one blow, has abridged the difficulty, by contesting all Miracles, but what have the sanction of Scripture for them. And tho', by this bold push, the Doctor has dealt with us more unmercifully than his Brethren, yet it must be owned he has acted more in character, and more consequent to Reforming Principles: because, as he justly observes, p. 96. of his *Introduction*, admitting the Miraculous Powers to have subsisted in the Church in any one Age after the Apostles, there can no tolerable reason be assigned for disallowing her claim in any succeeding Age. And whereas, as he had observed, just before, p. 76. of his *Introduction*, the Miracles attested by the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries became a confirmation of doctrines and institutions, entirely Popish, and rejected at this time of day by himself and all true Protestants, as superstitious; the belief of one must, of consequence, infer the belief of the others. Therefore the Doctor, in this desperate case, thinking himself under a necessity of rejecting both or none, has embraced the first extreme, chusing rather to appear an Infidel in belief, than to be a half-paced Reformer. But a desperate conduct, in support of a desperate cause, is no proof of the reasonableness of it; and that the Doctor's proceeding, in this point, is wholly destitute of reason (as he is now become our antagonist in this debate) is incumbent on us to shew.

To follow the Doctor, step by step, through his whole extraordinary skepticism, would carry me beyond the narrow bounds of a single Section. I have occasionally touched upon, and obviated his principal argument, as it fell in pertinently to the subject in hand, in another place. *Ven. of Relicks*, Sect. 2.

I WILL,

I WILL endeavour to dispatch his remaining exceptions with only a few remarks, such as are obvious, and cannot be dispensed with, since I apprehend a naked view of his arguments in themselves, sufficient to discover their weakness; they being, I beg leave to say, either foreign to the purpose, or what make as much against scriptural Miracles, even those of CHRIST and his Apostles, as against the Miraculous Powers of the Church; and therefore by proving too much, prove nothing at all.

IN his Preface, p. 9. the Doctor lays down the following rule for the basis of his *Inquiry*, and of his own judgment resulting from it — He says, “ That “ the reality of a fact depends on the joint credibility “ of the fact itself, and of the witnesses that attest it.” But the first part of this rule, I apprehend, wants an explanation, or not to be true, but under certain restrictions.

IF, by *credibility*, he means the *probability* of a fact, his rule is true, with respect to human actions; because, what is humanly improbable, no doubt, becomes humanly incredible: But with respect to supernatural facts, I beg leave to demur to the rule, and even to reject it entirely.

FOR instance, *Raising the Dead to Life*, carries no appearance of human probability, and is only miraculous because it is above what is human: therefore it's credibility must rest on some other foundation. This, to us that have a fact by rehearsal, or from other hands, the Doctor thinks to be the credit of their vouchers; which is the second member of his rule.

NOW the vouchers to the primitive Miracles were the primitive Fathers, whom the Doctor, therefore, has industriously endeavoured to discredit to all intents and purposes, and I have already, occasionally, attempted to vindicate. *Ven. of Relicks*, sect. 2. What I said then, I therefore need not repeat. In sum, the merit of their evidence depends on the resolution of one plain and obvious

obvious inquiry, viz. Whether they are to be deemed men of common sense, and of an honest heart? For, with regard to miracles, which are matters of fact, I cannot apprehend any other qualification requisite.

AND now, to dispute them either of these qualities, upon the Doctor's single and singular judgment, or groundless prejudices, in contradiction to the universal repute, they had ever possessed in the world, seems, as I observed heretofore, quite unreasonable: but yet, even the nature and validity of their evidence, so far as it is by us admitted, seems to be what the Doctor has also widely mistaken.

FOR, first, the credit we give them, as mere relators of facts, and abstracting from Church authority, is no more than an historical credit, such as is due (in proportion to the degree of credit they may deserve) to every author of historical records. But our belief of the Miraculous Powers subsisting from time to time in the Church, as an article of our Faith, rests on the authority of the Church, under the direction and influence of the HOLY GHOST, which understands the predictions or promises of our Blessed Lord, cited in the last Section, *John* xiv. 12. *Mark* xi. 16. to appertain, indefinitely, to all times of the Church's being. And therefore where the Doctor, p. 112. of his *Introduction*, allows the testimony of the Fathers "to be
" of use in transmitting to us the genuine Books of
" the Scriptures," &c. &c. If he means that he receives them upon their bare testimony, he, in this, pays them a deference, which we ourselves do not; for we follow St. Austin's rule, who affirms, "That
" he would not believe (even) the Gospel, unless he
" was induced thereto by the authority of the Church." *Ep. Fundam.* c. 4, 5. Therefore it is the authority of the Church in all these matters, in which she espouses the evidence of the Fathers, which renders it of any kind of weight with us in point of Faith.

SECONDLY, Taking the Fathers, in this point, as barely historical evidences, we are not tied down to the belief of every individual fact they may have delivered; but, considering their complex relations in a body, we look upon it a thing incredible, that they should, one and all of them, conspire in a formed confederacy of imposing upon the whole world in their own time, and ever since, an incomprehensible belief of the Miraculous Powers subsisting in the Church, if it had not been founded on truth; and still more surprising, if they had thus intruded on mankind their own inventions, that they should have obtained that current success for so many centuries, never to be detected, till Dr. Middleton, after more than fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hundred years, by some unknown lights, discovered all their cheats and impostures.

THEREFORE, when the Doctor advances, afterwards, in his *Postscript*, p. 216, 217. that the history of miracles is widely different from that of common events, “the one always to be suspected of course, without the strongest evidence for it; the other to be admitted of course, without the strongest reason to suspect it.”—In answer to this, it will be reasonable to ask, Why the universal opinion of the existence of the Miraculous Powers, prevailing for so many ages, and resting on the testimony of vouchers of established repute, the primitive Fathers, being opposed to his skepticism and singular judgment, coming so late, is not to be reputed this strong evidence, and the strongest historical evidence that can be required?

BUT thirdly, allowing some of their relations may have been mistakes, 'tis morally impossible they could all be so; and then, supposing any one to be true since the Apostolic Age, and I think those I have cited more than once from St. Ambrose and St. Austin, as ocular witnesses, deserves this irrefragable credit: then these two evidences prove the Miraculous Powers to have subsisted after the Apostles time, and consequently

quently destroy the whole system of the Doctor's opposition against them.

THUS much I thought proper to add to our prior defence of the Fathers, and as an illustration of the nature of their evidences, and of the credit we allow them, as historical witnesses of facts.

BUT, before I proceed to canvass his other exceptions to the Miraculous Powers, I beg leave to make a transient digression to another point, which still has a connection with the point in debate.

HE often, in the course of his criticism, makes an avowed confession, particularly in his *Introduction*, p. 65. that the state of retirement (by him contemptuously called *Monkery*) and all the pretended present corruptions of Rome, were taught and defended by the Fathers of those several ages, and even miracles alleged in their favour; and, as in this confession he is more ingenuous than his Brethren, who endeavour to stifle or disguise the sentiments of these great men, we are so far obliged to him.

BUT now, from this frank concession, there occur two obvious questions to be asked — First, Why the evidence of the Fathers, to such doctrines and rites, should be admitted, as a proof that these respective doctrines were then professed? And why their witnessing such and such miracles, should not equally conclude the existence of those powers; or be sufficient to prove such miracles had been then actually wrought? For, had they prevaricated in either of these relations, they being relatively to a matter of fact, *to wit*, Whether it were so, or was not so, it had been an easy task to have convicted them of falsehood.

SECONDLY, It may be asked, Why the Fathers attestation to the doctrines of the Church, in their times, being admitted, is not to be reputed a proof of it's being the doctrine derived from the Apostles?

To the first, as he frankly acknowledges the different evidences, *viz.* to the doctrines and miracles, and
has

has assigned no other disparity between one and the other, than what we have just refuted; I take it for granted, that he could not, and I apprehend none can be given.

To the second, he says, in the body of his inquiry, that no advantage can accrue to us from his said concession, because he admits the Fathers, "Barely as witnesses, not as guides; declaring to us what was then believed, not what was true—what was practiced, not what ought to be practiced," *Inquiry* p. 112.—Very good; and thank God we have an infallible guide, which he has not; the Church *guided by the HOLY GHOST into all truth*, and teaching us all truth.

BUT still, to argue *ad hominem*, the Fathers, as witnesses, are yet in this sense guides (and so confessed by him) to point out, or to shew us the road of the Church in their time; that is, to tell us the doctrines and rites which were then professed, which we find to be the same as the Catholic Church professes now.

WHAT then, says he, *The dispute between us is not, how ancient the Catholic Doctrines and Practices are, but how true?*—granted; but, (abstracting from the assured rule of the truth of the Church's Doctrine, her infallibility as a guide, we apprehend, the antiquity of a doctrine or practice, to be the strongest presumption, and the best human proof for its being genuine and true, that can be desired. No, says the Doctor, for this plea, antiquity and authority, was the plea of the heathens themselves for their superstitious rites.

BUT, surely, as fond, as he every where shews himself, of putting us upon a level with those enemies of Christianity, and of a revealed religion, he cannot be so blinded with passion and prejudice, as not to see a wide difference betwixt their appeal and our's to the voice of antiquity. For the heathenish rites being originally and fundamentally bad, no length of time could give a sanction to them; but, like a

corrupted spring, the nearer you approach to it, the more infected its waters are.

BUT the origin of Christianity being indisputably good, the nearer it draws to its source (humanly speaking) the purer it must be: I say humanly speaking, because, as the Doctrine of the Church is conveyed through the channels of truth itself, *viz.* the Church under the influence of the HOLY GHOST, there can be no danger of its receiving any infection by its removal or distance from the source; but will be always pure and untainted in all ages.

AND NOW, to come to a close of this digression, and to sum up the whole strength of the precedent argument; the Doctor's owning the Fathers to be abettors of the Catholic Doctrine and Practices, is, as I observed in the beginning, an act of ingenuity we thank him for; because, though this confession is no more than what the force of truth has extorted from him, yet it is what his friends have not been so candid to make before.

BUT, then, his thinking this concession can give no weight to the Catholic cause, we apprehend to be a mistake, and flatter ourselves, from what we have just offered, will be judged so by the impartial reader: for, certainly, from the nature of the thing, long prescription, and antiquity, strengthen the right of every tenure. Still, the stress we lay on these, or the merit we allow to primitive authority, is what the Doctor has again widely mistaken. We profess a profound respect for antiquity, we pay a deference to its brightest ornaments, the primitive Fathers; yet only as creditable witnesses: for it is the authority of the Church, and the traditions, she has espoused, on which our faith rests as our guide and main support, next to the word of God, of which she is the legal interpreter: the Church, I say, whose credit being unshaken (and CHRIST has promised that Hell itself should

should not effect it) all attacks upon us, any other way, are vain and idle.

I now return from this digression, to the direct subject matter of this section, which was to canvass the Doctor's remaining exceptions to the Miraculous Powers, which we hope to make appear to be as weak and groundless, as any of the rest we have already produced.

HE ushers these in with a postulate, which won't be granted, and, though it should, makes nothing for his purpose, which is this. He says, there is no clear account of the successors to the Apostles, for the forty years immediately following, having inherited their Miraculous Powers; from whence he concludes a cessation of them ever since. But I apprehend his assertion to be arbitrary, and therefore, his inference from it inconclusive.

FOR, first, his argument is at best but a negative one; and, as there is no positive proof of the Powers having failed within that intermediate space, nothing decisive can be drawn from it.

SECONDLY, if it were so, that there was no explicit account of miracles within that time, might not this have happened, because Christianity being then in its infancy, and its several concerns not yet ripe enough to be digested into regular records or memoirs; there was nothing else then appeared but mere dogmatical epistles and instructions to the faithful, to confirm them in the faith, they had just received from the Apostles? and that the Pastors found work enough on their hands to guard their flocks against an inundation of evils daily flowing upon them, from outward persecutions of infidels, and intestine divisions, and delusions of false brethren?

THIRDLY, Is not St. IGNATIUS the Martyr's prayer when condemned to be devoured by wild beasts, that he might not be spared, as other confessors had been, (all which is gathered from his own epistles) a

plain insinuation that these prodigies had happened before, and, surely, these deliveries must be reputed as miraculous as DANIEL's delivery in the lions den, which is mentioned in Holy Writ as a miraculous manifestation of the Divine Power.

FOURTHLY, the immediate successors to these great Champions of the Christian Faith, who were personally acquainted with them, JUSTIN and IRENÆUS, speaking of the miracles that were wrought within their knowledge and memory, though they did not reduce their relations into the regularity of annals or records, may they not be supposed to allude to the miracles of their earlier, as well as of their later days? therefore, as I just said, there is only a bare negative against the existence of the Miraculous Powers, in that small interval of time; whereas there are plain insinuations, and the strongest presumptions, for it.

BUT though the whole argument should be admitted, *viz.* that there was, in that space of time, a suspension of the Miraculous Powers; it makes nothing against the Catholic claim; and therefore is nothing to the Doctor's purpose: because the Church does not, by this claim, pretend to any inherent virtue, or to a periodical succession of the Powers, but that Almighty God has frequently, since the Apostolic age, bestowed them upon her; and, by CHRIST's promise, MARK xi. and elsewhere, may, and does, from time to time, when it seems meet to his unsearchable wisdom, bless her with them; which the Reformed Churches never had, nor ever pretended to.

THE Doctor is next obliged, (Introd. p. 85.) to take up with the arguments which his friends make use of for the cessation of miracles in these later times, *viz.* that after the propagation of the Gospel had gained ground, and especially after it was supported and encouraged by public authority, the Miraculous Powers in those circumstances being unnecessary, were withdrawn,

BUT, first, if these Powers flourished before this happy epoch of the establishment of religion by law, and during the time the Church was under persecution, it, at least, overturns the Doctor's system of their having failed immediately from the Apostolic age. And, as by his avowed concession, *Introd. p. 96.* allowing the Miraculous Powers to subsist at any time after the Apostles, gives a just claim to them in every succeeding age; this pretended plea of the occasion of their ceasing, can no ways avail his purpose.

BUT, again, by what inspiration or authority does he or his friends limit the manifestation of the Divine Powers? *The spirit*, as has been said, *breathes where and when it lists.* In the Jewish Church the gift of prophecy and miracles flourished and subsided in different *Æras*, which we cannot presume to account for. Our Blessed Lord's prediction or promise of miracles to his Church, *St. MARK, c. xi.* and elsewhere, is not limited to any time; and therefore it does not become any one else to set bounds to them, which *CHRIST* has not.

WITHIN the body of the inquiry he excepts against the Miraculous Powers, from the characters of the persons vested with them, whom he supposes to be the laity, the very scum of the people; or a set of obscure monks and recluses, against the last of whom he conceives an inveterate spleen and prejudice. But this objection seems, first, to be wholly arbitrary; for, the Fathers saying, as he relates it, *that miracles were wrought among them*, does not exclude the Clergy from a share in the gift of these Powers—Secondly, supposing it to be, as he says: Almighty God, when he drew *DAVID* from having the care of his father's flock to sway the scepter of Israel, he told *SAMUEL* that he did not regard the mien or condition of the person, but the heart—*CHRIST*, in forming his College of Apostles, chose a set of ignorant fishermen; and *St. PAUL* tell us, that, “He makes use of
“ the foolish of the world to confound the wise, and
“ of

“ of the weak to defeat the strong :” and, therefore, Almighty God, in his infinite wisdom, might have pursued the same conduct, in selecting, for the instruments of his miraculous operations, an ignorant but virtuous clown, or an humble recluse, preferably to an irreligious statesman, or a proud churchman—Oh ! surely the Doctor must be conscious to himself of a bad cause, and a dearth of arguments, to be necessitated to lay hold of such feeble supports in its defence.

ANOTHER exception to the miracles of the primitive times, as weak and defenceless as the last, is the pretended ostentatious manner, with which he alleges them to have been operated, when they challenged the infidels to assist at them, and to become ocular witnesses of the supernatural events.

BUT, be it so ; what does this charge evince, but that those primitive miracles were done in the face of the whole world, and were so frequent, notorious and evident, that they could not be concealed, and what the Christians had no need to be ashamed of. Tricks and juggles are the works of darkness, and usually practiced in a corner ; and if the primitive miracles had been such, the abettors of them must have been mad, as well as insolent, to have provoked their enemies to discover their cheats and impostures.

’TIS true, the supernatural preservation of the Martyrs from fire, wild beasts, and other variety of torments they laboured under, though made never so manifest, were what the infidel tyrants, and their executioners, imputed to magic art ; as the miracles of our Blessed Lord were by the Jews ascribed to Beelzebub before. But I am sorry the Doctor has no better precedents to copy after, for the support of his injurious surmise.

HOWEVER, to speak directly to the trivial and indecent objection ; what is there in the pompousness and solemnity of the primitive miracles, which an infidel or deist might not object to many scriptural miracles, even those of our Blessed Saviour himself?

IN

IN the third book of Kings we are told of a public challenge which Elijah gave the Prophets of Baal to engage with him in a trial of the Miraculous Powers. The test of their skill proposed was an ox to be allotted to each party; to be placed on an Altar, and a fire to be drawn from heaven to consume the holocaust: the success of their prayers, on the side it declared itself, to determine who was to be reputed the true God, Baal, or the God of Israel. The proposal was accepted, the whole body of the people, King Achab himself also being present, were summoned to be witnesses of the strife. The false prophets having from morning till noon called in vain on Baal to be propitious to their prayers, Elijah scoffed at their miscarriage; and lastly, when it came to his turn to exert the Miraculous Power, he was endued with, he did it in the most solemn, pompous, and confident manner; and upon the issue of the event, flushed as it were, with success, he demanded that all the false prophets should be sacrificed on the spot, as a trophy to his victory. Now had an operation of this pompous nature been related of St. SIMEON, STYLITES, St. HILARION, or of any other professor of monkery, as the Doctor contemptuously calls these primitive recluses, what a fine subject of raillery would it not have afforded him?

AGAIN, we read in the book of Exodus, that MOSES had a frequent strife of power with the Magicians of Ægypt; and, to omit numerous other scriptural proofs to the same effect, our Blessed Lord himself was continually repeating, and making a merit to the Jews, of the many signs and wonders he wrought among them. Therefore, as a direct answer to this trivial objection; from all these scriptural instances, which seem to discover an air of ostentation, we are to gather the following important instruction—that actions are not to be weighed nor judged by their outward appearances, but from the inward spirit that influences and directs them.

THERE may be in actions, in themselves, truly commendable, an ostentation of one's own virtue, which is the height of luciferian pride: and there may be a manifestation of the Divine Power, which is compatible with the profoundest humility. Such was the spirit that actuated the operations of those great servants of God, the instruments of his Divine Honour, which we just recited from the inspired writings—such was the act of the Blessed Virgin, as I mentioned in another place, the greatest and humblest of all Creatures, when *she magnified the Lord for the mighty things he had done to her*. And such, in fine, was the spirit of the primitive Christians, when they gloried in the virtues and powers, Almighty God had indued them with; not out of a vain ostentation of their own merit, but for a manifestation of the Divine omnipotency: out of a zeal for his honour and glory, and for the advancement of the cause of his Church, and propagation of his law: and thorough an inward instigation of the same Divine Spirit, which had bestowed upon them those virtues, whose ways are unsearchable and above human understanding.

THE exception to the primitive miracles, which occurs next to be animadverted upon, is with respect to the miracles themselves, considered in their own nature.

UNDER this head comes his objection to those which were wrought in confirmation of, or even by the means of the Catholic rites, which the Doctor looks upon as superstitious; and therefore he not being disposed to allow them, is necessitated to reject their evidences. But this argument manifestly, begs the question, and, as it has been over-ruled in another place, where, speaking of miracles wrought by the Relicks of Saints, Ven. of Rel. sect. 2. I occasionally touched upon it, I refer my reader to that reply.

HIS further objections on this head turn upon two points—first, that among the Miraculous Powers we lay

lay claim to, there is a deficiency of some, which seem to be most requisite, and were likely to be most serviceable — and, secondly, that there was an ostentation of others, which were, in their own nature liable to the suspicion of cheat and imposture.

THE Powers of the first sort, that he thinks to have been wanting, were the *Gift of Tongues*, which he roundly affirms to have never existed since the Apostolic age. But, as we have only his bare word for it, we are at liberty to believe him or no, as we please. He, indeed, has the assurance, in contradiction to attested facts, to instance the truth of this assertion, against the Apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier, to whom the miracles of every other kind being allotted, this, he says, was never mentioned. *Pref. p. 20.*

BUT, if we believe the history of this Saint's life, translated by Mr. Dryden, he not only occasionally possessed this gift in an eminent degree, so as to speak the several languages of those countries most perfectly and elegantly, tho' they were above an hundred in number, and thirty of them entirely different; and to understand reciprocally, the natives of those various and extensive climates; but, moreover, with two additional privileges, *to wit*, of being understood when preaching to an auditory composed of different nations and dialects, as tho' he had been haranguing each in their mother tongue. — Secondly, of satisfying, by a single answer, several questions proposed to him, at the same time, relating to different subjects.

BUT, supposing that this gift had not been known to have existed, since the Apostolic age; God is Master of his own gifts, and has his own times and seasons to dispose of them.

AMONG the Miraculous Powers, which the Evangelist gives us an account of, exerted by our Blessed Saviour, the Gift of Tongues is not once mentioned, unless the three Hebrew words he uttered on the Cross, *Eloi, Eloi, &c.* are to be reckoned an instance of it;

tho', for ought we know, he might as well have had persons of various tongues to deal with, as the Apostles, after the Descent of the HOLY GHOST upon them, then residing in Judæa.—And when St. John Baptist sent to be informed whether he was the Messiah, our Blessed Lord returned a distinct account of his Miraculous Powers as a token of his Divine Mission; but the Gift of Tongues was not included in the list.

EVEN the Apostles themselves, and the Disciples, who felt that astonishing and immediate influence, by the visible Descent of the HOLY GHOST upon them, were not all gifted alike. For, as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xii. 28. GOD, for the exaltation of his Church, in it's infancy, when it stood most in need of the manifestation of his Miraculous Powers, *made some Apostles, others Prophets — others he endued with the Power of Miracles — gave the virtue of healing to others; and, he blessed some (tho' but a few) with the Gift of Tongues.* And, therefore, if, in the succeeding times of his Church, he did not bestow this last Gift, where it was not wanted, what can be inferred from it, but that his All-wise Providence does not distribute his Blessings in vain. Relatively to the Gift of Tongues, thus were those countries circumstanced, where the primitive Fathers lived, who leave us an account mostly of those miracles which were operated within their own neighbourhood, where the Greek and Latin were then the living languages in use, and where any other would have been as unserviceable, as Syriac in England.

BUT, whether Almighty God did not bestow this Gift on Missionaries in foreign parts, is what they have not told us, and therefore is more than what the Doctor can presume to determine. We have just heard of a late instance, in St. Francis Xavier, of his being blessed with this Gift; and tho' it be insinuated in the history of his life, that it was more temporary and occasional than habitual; is yet such an authentic at-

testation

testation of the fact, as must be deemed at least a sufficient counterpoise to the Doctor's denial of it.

HE cavils next with the Miraculous Powers, which, by the primitive relations, did subsist in those times — These were, *Raising the Dead* — *healing the sick* — *casting out devils*, &c. &c. Postsc. p. 72, &c.

THE first power of *Raising the Dead*, he confidently avers was never exerted in the Church, since the Apostles time: and tho' he presently after confesses that St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lions in France, in the second Century, asserted the manifestation of this astonishing power in several instances, yet he thinks Theophilus, at the same time Bishop of Antioch in Asia, disclaiming the said Power, to invalidate intirely St. Irenæus's testimony: and I apprehend this to be just as conclusive, as to suppose that the Sun does not shine at Constantinople, because it may be overcast at London. Therefore, in short, Theophilus might have been sensible of their not having this Power at home, yet, at so great a distance as France, have been ignorant of it's existing there: and, in the mean while, why he is to be believed disclaiming the Powers in one place, and St. Irenæus asserting them in another, is not to be believed, I would be glad to know.

AND lastly, Theophilus his seemingly lamenting the negation of this Power, insinuates it to have been a subtraction of a Grace they had been favoured with not long before: and then, What becomes of the Doctor's assertion of this Power having failed since the Apostolic Age?

BUT, in short, if the Doctor was only endued with a little candour, and barely an historical faith, he would allow some credit due to several authentic relations of the dead raised to life since St. Irenæus's time, which I have not room to appeal to here.

To go no further than St. FRANCIS XAVIER, just mentioned; there are twenty-four attested instances of this miracle of miracles, attributed to him, which

there is as little room to doubt of, as of his having been in the Indies, or that ever such a man was in being.

As to the other Powers, *viz.* of healing the sick, casting out Devils, and the rest, the Doctor thinks them to lie under the strongest suspicion of imposture. But first, his bare surmise or imagination, is no proof; and he unfortunately borrows his distrust from his old friends the Jews, who were ever charging the imputation of imposture, on our Blessed Saviour, with regard to his miraculous cures; and adding, that he chased away devils in virtue of Belzebub, and by a diabolical combination.

AND now, relatively to the primitive miracles, just specified, the credit of their venerable vouchers, the ancient Fathers, which we flatter ourselves to have sufficiently established above, may be allowed to overballance his injurious cavils. There is an instance of the Miraculous Powers in another nature, which he has not only unguardedly confessed, to the utter overthrow of his extravagant opposition, but has made use of them to another malignant purpose. This is the miraculous delivery of the martyrs, lying under the pressures of their various tortures; which as I hinted in another place, he mentions, and owns not to their honour, but to extenuate the merit of their glorious sacrifice, while he supposes a presumptuous confidence of being favoured with this supernatural preservation, egged them on, and made them more eager for the combat.

HOWEVER, the fact is by him confessed, and evinces, at least, in this respect, a glaring manifestation of the Miraculous Powers.

WE come now to the Doctor's last corps of reserve; and it may, therefore, be supposed, what he thought not the least formidable of all his forces, since he reserved it to bring up the rear, and to make with it his desperate push; though, indeed, in the course of the
controversy

controverſy he had every now and then thrown it in to take a ſhare in the combat. In a word, not content, as we have juſt ſeen, to borrow aid from the Jews to impugn the Miraculous Powers, he now hauls in even the Heathens themſelves to his aſſiſtance.

He heretofore ſhewed himſelf extremely fond of drawing a parallel between the Pagan rites and thoſe of the Catholic Church; and the vanity and malice of his attempt has been expoſed, as it deſerved, by a better hand.

Now he affects to put upon a level the falſe miracles of the Pagans, which were the avowed deeds of Satan, with the true miracles wrought by the Chriſtians, which they always aſcribed to a Divine Power, and were done in God's name. He attempts to ſink the reputation of one, by oppoſing to it the lying fame of the other; and, to this intent, allows the records of thoſe works of darkneſs equal credit with the Primitive Fathers, St. CHRYSOSTOM, AMBROSE, AUSTIN, JEROM, and the reſt, the greateſt Lights of the Church, celebrated for their learning and virtue, who tranſmitted to us the triumphs of the power of God over that of Satan. And, laſtly, he is not aſhamed to give weight to the objections which JULIAN the Apoſtate, CELSUS, and other avowed abettors of Paganism, made in hatred of Chriſtianity, to the primitive miracles heretofore,

Now when a man's inveterate prepoſſeſſions push him on to take ſuch unguarded and unwarrantable ſteps: when under the counterſeit pretence of inquiring into truth, and becoming an advocate for it, he is obliged to ſide with its moſt virulent enemies, he ſinks quite beneath our notice. What is there in the odious parallel, which he affects to draw between the Pagan deluſions and the Miraculous Powers aſſerted by the Church, but what atheists might urge to invalidate the proofs of Chriſtianity, and a Revealed Religion? the empire of Satan has been of very ancient ſtanding:
alas!

alas! we are too sensible of it from Holy Writ itself, without having recourse to the testimony of its Pagan vouchers. From the first beginning, that he drew mankind from the homage of their Creator, to become a votary to himself, he affected to ape the Divine Worship in every particular: he had his Altar, his Sacrifices, his Priests, his Oracles, and his false Prophets, to correspond to the Divine Prophets; and, in short, by God's permission, and just judgment on his insatuated votaries, he also had, for their further delusion, his ministers, to display his infernal powers.

THE Magicians of Egypt, through their hellish art, did surprising things in opposition to the supernatural wonders wrought by MOSES; Simon Magus did the like in emulation of the miracles of the Apostles; and, in time to come, Antichrist will do such seeming wonders, as will go near to deceive even the elect. But, still, these will always be deemed the works of darkness, mere illusions and impostures; and the others the handy-work of God himself, and a demonstration and proof of the Divine Power. And, as Almighty God's arm is not shortened, nor his power abridged, what, we are assured by the inspired penmen, he has done heretofore, he can do again; and in spite of Dr. Middleton's shameful recourse to Paganism, to the Jews, and to every other odious refuge, to invalidate our proof of the existence of the Miraculous Powers since the Apostolic age, we doubt not but, even from the feeble defence of them we have here attempted, it will appear evident, to every unprejudiced judgment, that Almighty God from time to time, for the exaltation of his Church, has given glorious manifestations of them.

THO' the narrow limits, I am confined to, would not allow me to descant on the Doctor's extravagant opposition so largely as there is room for it, and the subject might require; yet I think I have faithfully set forth the substance and marrow of his arguments, and have omitted none that can be reputed of
any

any weight. In giving you now, and before, *Ven. of Relicks*, sect. 2. this short sketch of his temerarious undertaking, with only such obvious remarks as could not be excused, it has swelled them into two long sections. Nevertheless I cannot take leave of the Doctor, without trespassing further on your patience with a brief relation of the pleasant and extraordinary manner, he goes about to justify his own professed disregard for the primitive Fathers, and how he accounts for the contrary deference paid to them, by the rest of his Reforming Brethren of his own Church.

HE sets forth this difference of sentiments, or rather, as he represents the matter, his candor in declaring his own sentiments, and their disingenuity in concealing theirs, in substance as follows. *Introd. p. 101, &c. &c.*

HE says, that in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, when matters were not quite ripe for a Reformation, the King, utterly averse to such a change, and in every article, but his determined hatred to the Pope, a rank Papist; they were obliged to comply with his humour in the point in question, he might have added, in every other point; and how perfectly the Hero of the Reformation at home, Archbishop Cranmer played the sycophant to his Prince, and errant dissembler in matters of Religion, is well known.

HE proceeds to tell us, that in the reign of King Edward the Sixth, though a Reformation being then resolved upon and supported by law, they were at liberty to rectify the wrong steps they had taken in this respect, and were conscious of them, yet that, to avoid the mark of inconstancy, they chose to adhere to them. But, whereas they made a bold and immediate change in many other points more material, it is a subject of surprise, why they should have been so very scrupulous about this particular.

IN the reign of Queen Mary, he continues to tell us, that they were still less at liberty to recede from their first measures. And, no doubt, as they were of such a pliant disposition, to square their principles by the

the will of the reigning power, it will be easily supposed: and therefore it is much less to be wondered at, that, in the succeeding reign, when Queen Elizabeth, a Princess after their own heart, acceded to the throne, they intirely devoted themselves to her humour; and consequently, altho' she had modelled a Church according to the fashionable taste, yet when, being ambitious of it's having an antique hue, she among other things insisted on the primitive Fathers retaining their ancient credit, it is as little to be wondered at that they complimented her in a point, which they now began to look upon as a matter of indifference.

And in this manner the Doctor represents this point to have been conducted, the Fathers keeping their ground, till this late period of time, when the Church being fully established by law, he says, a motive of another nature has necessitated her to go on in the wrong track, that had been chalked out to them by their first Reformers, *to wit*, in self-defence against their sour, grumbling Dissenters; blowing hot and cold; at one time cramming the whole *posse* of the Fathers down their throats, to silence them: at other times, when returned upon themselves as evidences to Catholic tenets, making no account of their venerable authority.

THIS, in brief, is the idea this Gentleman gives of the establishment of his Church at home; for which, I can venture to say, his friends do not thank him; nor will I presume to animadvert upon it. I only beg leave to observe, that it entirely tallies with the relation I have given, through this Essay, of these Religious changes in general; of being a patched business, conducted by temporising motives, and principles of liberty and policy. A strange idea of a Godly Reformation! But, as I have here a Champion of the Reformation itself for my voucher, I may be truly allowed to say, *Out of thine own mouth I judge thee.* Luke ix. 22.

C H A P. X.

A Review of the Premises, addressed to every Christian Reader, who having his salvation at heart; is really in earnest in his search after the true faith, or the assured means to save his soul — and submitted as a direction to him in this important research — With a short Conclusion, in a Word of Advice, particularly to the Catholic Reader.

WE have now, Christian Reader, gone thro' the principal points controverted between the Catholic and Reformed Churches, that is, through as many as is necessary to answer the design of this Essay; which was to shew the vanity and unjustifiableness of the pretended Reformation, and that it has entirely fallen short of the merits of that arrogated title.

THE inauspicious beginning of that famed event, the infamous characters of the Authors of it, the springs and motives, which set it on foot, *viz.* Pride, Lust, Liberty, and every human Passion; and the unwarrantable methods, with which it was conducted (all which particulars we have set forth in the Introduction to this Essay) are invincible prejudices against it, and demonstrative proofs that the hand of GOD could not be concerned therein, nor the HOLY GHOST any ways influencing or aiding to it.

THEIR deserting in the sequel, the plain and obvious sense of Scripture, by imposing upon it their own arbitrary and forced interpretations; while the Catholic Doctrine is quite agreeable to the sacred Text in it's most natural meaning: this alone is enough to bring their Church into discredit, and is a confirmation of ours. And, whereas a Religious and Godly Reformation ought to have been calculated for the *Amendment of Manners*, and the *Restoration of Discipline*, as well as for the *abolishing of Errors*: they, by laying aside the Evangelical Counsels both in theory and practice,

by forfeiting those assured marks of holiness, and the means leading to it (as I have shewn in the last controversy) they thereby, I say, fail in this second end of a Church Reformation.

THESE truths are what I have attempted to prove in the course of this Essay; at least I humbly apprehend that what I have offered on this head, may deserve to carry so much weight with every dispassionate Reader, as to ground a reasonable distrust of the much-boasted work of the Reformation, and to give room for a just inquiry, whether that, or the Church it has pretended to reform, is, on the upshot, possessed of the true Faith of CHRIST, and of the assured means to salvation.

If Religion, indeed, was merely a political system, like so many forms of government, which, tho' varying from one another, yet are such as people may thrive and be happy under in this life, without prejudice to their eternal welfare in the next; it would, in this hypothesis, be a matter of indifference which Religion we embraced; and there might be an end, at once, of all our disputes and controversies. But, if it be certain that our Blessed Saviour has left us a fixed rule or system of Faith, and has marked out this *one* and *only* means of Salvation; and that, upon our hitting on this *only* means, our eternal happiness or misery is depending; then, it undoubtedly behoves us to make the most diligent inquiry where these means are to be found, whether in *this* or *that* Church; and whether only in one, or many forms of worship.

For want of this due inquiry, many are lulled, through the dictates of a false conscience, into a fatal security under the profession of erroneous principles — *There is a way, says Solomon, which seems to a man right, but it's end leads to perdition.* It was the once unhappy case of the Apostle: he acted no less by principle, and from an inward persuasion of being in the right, when he professed himself a bigotted zealot for his Paternal Traditions, in contradiction to the Law
of

of CHRIST, and persecuted his Ministers and Disciples, than when he afterwards was made a convert to him, and became an open and strenuous abettor of his Law. *I made progress; says he, in Judaism, beyond the rest of my equals, being more abundantly zealous for the Traditions of my forefathers.* Gal. i. 14. But the merit of his actions, in one and the other of these circumstances, was widely different. After his conversion he acted from a conviction of the Truth, which it pleased God to manifest to him in a manner, and to a degree of evidence entirely miraculous, and therefore his conduct, being squared to it, could not but be right.

BEFORE his conversion, tho' his actions proceeded *ex fide*, that is, according to the dictates of his conscience at that time, yet this conscience being erroneous, and the result of a rash, precipitate, and inconsiderate judgment; (since he ought to have informed himself better, and had the means of doing it) they were undoubtedly criminal.

THE Apostle himself afterwards looked on his prior conduct in this light, when he reputed himself *the least of the Apostles, because he had persecuted the Church of God.* I Cor. xv. 9.

Now there are two marks, from which the sincerity of our belief, and the justice of our Religious Principles, morally speaking, are to be gathered; and therefore deserving our notice in this place; the one is when the profession of our Religion is manifestly disinterested; the other when it is wholly divested of pride and passion. The bent of self-interest is so strong, that, when Faith, or our Religious Principles happen to clash with it, we find, by woful experience (as we shall have an occasion of shewing presently in sundry instances) that they are frequently made to give way to it's bias to the side of error. But it is monstrous, and almost inconceivable, that a man, being in the wrong, should continue opiniatively so, when he has not the prospect of reaping either pleasure or profit from his obstinacy. Now it is certain that self interest and tem-

poral emoluments, within these Realms, are far from being on the Catholic side of the question — But tho' the more ruling passion of pride sometimes interposing, may prevail over interest itself, and that therefore the forfeiture of temporal advantages cannot be brought as a conclusive argument for the justice of our principles; there are yet particular circumstances, in which even pride cannot be supposed to have any influence; as, for example, when a person at his expiring moments, quits the persuasion he had been brought up in, and espoused through the whole course of his life, to go over to a contrary belief: for, in this case, pride, considerations of honour, of leaving behind him a good name, or the apprehension of throwing himself under the imputation of levity of mind and inconstancy, strongly plead for his adhering to his former principles. And yet, we have precedents without number, of those who have come into the bosom of the Catholic Church, at these last solemn and serious moments; and we defy our adversaries to produce one single instance of any of ours (who had been brought up from the beginning in the Catholic Communion) having deserted it at this period of life, to embrace any other whatsoever. And tho' we do not affect to magnify this observation, no more than the former, to a decisive proof of the truth of our faith, we apprehend it, at least, to amount to a presumption in it's favour of the strongest nature, and what must carry weight with every thinking person and unprejudiced judgment.

I know, the abettors of Reforming Principles generally value themselves for their extensive charity, in holding Salvation attainable in every Christian Sect or Religion; not excluding the Catholic Church, from which they separated. But, besides, that they depart from this their universal charity almost in the same breath they assert it, by the grievous impeachments they lodge against the Catholic Church of Idolatry and

and damnable Errours, which, if their charge be just, are incompatible with Salvation; this great cry, in other respects, can be reputed no more than mere affectation; a gilt pill, to conceal the venom of their doctrine under a glittering cover; or a soporific bolus, to lull their deluded people into a lethargic security, under the profession of the most extravagant opinions.

TRUE Charity is, to be sure, the Queen of Virtues, their complement and perfection; so that, what St. Paul says, is certainly true, *Without Charity we are nothing*: And therefore a certain ingenious author had reason in saying (if his meaning was just) “that he “as little feared God would damn a man who had “Charity, as he could hope that a Priest could save “him without it.” But spiritual, as well as corporal Charity and Mercy, and their respective acts, may be mistaken and misplaced; and, on the other hand, it argues no want of Charity, to deny it to objects that are undeserving it.

FOR example, a jury declaring a convicted malefactor guilty of death, is not thereby uncharitable; nor a judge unmerciful in pronouncing upon him the capital sentence. And, in like manner, if our adversaries could make good their charge against the Catholic Church, of *Idolatry and damnable Errors*, they would be so far from being uncharitable in denying Salvation possible within her pale, while she laid under that impeachment, that, on the contrary, they must be ridiculous and incoherent with themselves in allowing it.

In order therefore to prove our Charity to be true, we must bring it to some test; and this can be no other than the rules which are transmitted to us in the Inspired Writings.

Now, with respect to the point in question, *viz.* concerning Faith, there are two rules explicitly mentioned and laid down in these Sacred Records — the first is, the obligation or necessity of Divine Faith — the second, it's Unity. St. Paul expressly avers the obligation

ligation of Divine Faith to Salvation; saying, that, *Without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Heb. xi. 6. Therefore, in consequence to this rule, purity of Faith is no less necessary to Salvation, than integrity of life, or the observance of the commandments; and consequently, as it would argue no uncharitableness to say, that a person living in an habitual breach of the commandments, is in a damnable state, so to entertain the like opinion of those who are destitute of true Faith, is equally out of the reach of censure. And this illustration of our doctrine, concerning the *necessity of Faith*, clears us from another odium our adversaries are fond of casting upon us, as tho' we damned All, personally, that dissent from us in matters of Faith. To say that *a man will be damned*, and to say that *he is in the state of damnation*, are judgements widely distant — the first highly shocking! and what we absolutely disavow — the second consistent with perfect Charity. In a word, Heresy, as well as Libertinism, are both, as I have said, damnable states. For, our Blessed Saviour himself declares, that *He that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark xvi. 16. and St. Paul, that *He (a heretic) is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment*, Tit. iii. 11. But, whether Peter living, and, seemingly, dying *impenitent*; or Paul living, and dying, apparently, *out of the Church*, are *damned*, we leave to the Searcher of Hearts, the just Judge of all mankind; and suspend our own judgments till the last Accounting Day, which will reveal every one's deeds, such as they are in themselves, and their respective lots.

The greater part of the Reformed Churches, which espouse St. Athanasius's Creed, in which all are anathematized dissenting from it's respective articles, can, by no other salvo, screen themselves from the imputation of uncharitableness, which they would fasten on us.

BUT, to return from this digression to the direct subject in hand, I say, that, as Faith is necessary to Salvation, so this Faith can only be *one*. The unity of Faith is equally grounded upon the Doctrine of CHRIST, and
his

his faithful interpreter St. Paul. The latter, writing to the Ephesians, tells us, that "CHRIST, besides
" Apostles and Evangelists, has given to his Church
" Pastors and Doctors, for the perfecting of the
" Saints — for the work of the ministry; for the
" edifying the Body of CHRIST, *till we all meet in the*
" *unity of Faith* — that we be no more children tossed
" to and fro, with every blast of doctrine in the un-
" certainty of men, and their crazy contrivances to
" deceive. Ephes. iv. 11, &c.

IMMEDIATELY before, the Apostle avers the *unity of Faith*, in these strong, expressive terms, *There is one Body*, says he, *and one Spirit, as you are called, in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism.* Ibid. v. 4.

AND the Apostle, in these positive declarations of the *unity of Faith*, only expounds, or rather repeats the doctrine of his Blessed Master himself; who establishes it in the following words, " Other sheep I have,
" which are not of this fold — them also must I bring,
" and they will hear my voice, and *there shall be one*
" *fold and one Shepherd.* John x. 16.

AND the Night before his Passion, praying for his Disciples, he adds, that he does not *pray for them alone, but for those also that shall believe in me, thro' their word, that they all may be one.* Ibid. xvii. 20.

THESE sacred Texts appeared so clear, for the unity of Faith, to the greatest Lights and Doctors of the Church, that they could not bring themselves to entertain any notion of our modern Reformers universal Charity, in making Salvation compatible with contradictory beliefs and systems of doctrine; but, on the contrary, as it is a mistaken Charity and ridiculous in itself, clashing with common sense, and repugnant to the express declarations of Scripture, so they absolutely exploded it; anathematized the authors and abettors of all diversity of belief, and admitted of no Salvation possible out of the *one Fold of CHRIST.*

ST.

St. Austin writes to Donatus upon this subject as follows — “ Being out of the pale of the Church, “ thou wouldst not escape damnation, though thou “ shouldest be burnt alive for confessing the name of “ CHRIST.” *Aug. Ep. ad Donat. Ep.* 204.

St. Fulgentius, to the same effect, says, “ That “ neither baptism, nor liberal alms, nor death itself, “ can avail a man any thing in order to salvation, if “ he does not hold the Unity of the Catholic Church.” *Ful. c. 39. ad Pet. Dom.*

BOTH these Fathers only adopted, in this point, the sentiments of the great St. Cyprian, who preceded them long before. He in his Treatise of the unity of the Church, declares that, “ Whoever, leaving the “ Church, cleaves to an adulteress, is cut off from “ having any share in the promises made to the “ Church.” And again he argues thus, “ If it were “ possible, says he, for any to escape that were not “ in the Ark of Noah, it will likewise be possible “ for him to escape who is not in the Church.”— Thus this holy Father, from one avowed impossibility deduces another.

AND, in short, the sentiments of these learned Doctors want no comment; they manifestly plead for the Catholic side of the question; and therefore, if we are to be reputed uncharitable for holding Unity of Faith, to be an essential condition of Salvation; or, otherwise, for thinking all those to be in the state of perdition, who are not within the pale of the one Catholic Church, planted by CHRIST; these holy Fathers come under the same censure; and even St. PAUL is not out of its reach, when he so plainly asserts an Unity of Faith in the texts aforecited; and, on another occasion, *Galat. c. i. 8.* has carried his zeal so far against the innovators of those early days, as to say, that though an Angel from Heaven should teach them a doctrine different from what they had learnt from him, that he should be anathema; which

was to say, that he should be accursed, or incur the guilt of damnation.

BUT whither can we better have recourse, in order to settle this point concerning *Unity of Faith*, than to the source itself of the only saving faith, and principle of unity, CHRIST JESUS? Our Blessed Lord, during his mortal sojournment on earth, had two principal offices laid upon him by his Eternal Father, the one of our Redeemer, the other of our Lawgiver, Teacher, and Guide: as our Redeemer, he opened to mankind Heaven gates, which till then had been shut against us: as our Teacher and Guide, he was to put us into the plain and direct road to this port of bliss. In this second capacity, under which alone we are to consider him here, with respect to our present inquiry, he declared himself the Messiah, long promised to the Jews, and the hopes and expectation of the Gentiles, the wisdom of God, and even the God himself, tho' hid under the veils of flesh, mortality, and corruption: as such he took upon him to lay the foundations of a new Church, to teach a doctrine, they had never learnt before, but confirmed and sealed by unheard of signs and miracles, and to shew a readier way to salvation than what they had hitherto gone; and he gathered unto himself Apostles and Disciples, who paid an entire deference to his Divine Instructions and Precepts.

Now I say, viewing our Blessed Lord in this secondary capacity, on the one hand, as a Lawgiver, a Teacher, and the Author of faith, or the true means of salvation; and considering, on the other, the many divisions and jarring opinions, subsisting at present, among Christians, about the nature of this faith and means of salvation, it is obvious and even necessary to put the following queries. Did our Divine Master establish one Church, one Faith, and one means of Salvation? or did he deliver different and contradictory systems of faith? the former conduct must cer-

tainly be judged most agreeable to his increated wisdom and infinite goodness; and the latter would have given as great a shock to our idea of these his Divine Attributes; and therefore, to assert it, would be nothing less than blasphemy. Therefore, our Blessed Lord did, undoubtedly, deliver to his Apostles, and to the rest of his followers, an uniform system of doctrine, one invariable faith, or means of salvation. But then, I proceed: when, just before his Ascension he gave a solemn commission to his Apostles to go and *Teach all nations, baptising them, &c.* Matt. xxviii. 19. did he injoin them to conform faithfully to the doctrine and faith he had taught them, and to communicate the same, unaltered, to the people and nations, among which they were to be dispersed, to promulgate his Gospel? or did he leave them at liberty to plant each of them a Church, after their own mode and humour, or he himself direct them to establish various and contradictory systems of faith? for example, did our Blessed Saviour order St. PETER to assert at Rome, and in the other districts, under his immediate charge, a real presence of his sacred Body and Blood in the Eucharist, and to establish there the rest of the Catholic tenets? Did he commission St. PAUL to propagate the figurative system in the Lord's Supper, with the rest of the principles of the Church of England, in Asia? did he appoint St. THOMAS to teach pure Lutheranism in the Indies? and permit St. MATTHEW to settle rigorous Calvinism in Ethiopia? and so of the rest: or were they all to agree in the same creed amongst themselves, and to publish it within the Provinces assigned to them? I think the command, their Blessed Master annexed to their commission, resolves this question past any ambiguity or controversy: for having bid them go *Preach to all nations, baptizing them, &c.* Matt. xxviii. 19. he added in the next verse, *Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you,* v. 20. And stupid and dull of apprehension, as they constantly appeared to be, with
regard

regard to the many truths he delivered to them from time to time, he had told them before, that another Paraclete would bring into their minds all he had taught them, and enlighten their understanding to comprehend them. *These things, says he, have I spoken to you, abiding with you, but the Paraclete, the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.* John. xiv. 25, 26.

Now from these premises the following plain conclusion directly ensues, as it's natural and necessary consequence, *viz.* that as CHRIST was uniform in his doctrinal instructions to his Apostles, and as they were to abide and steer by them in the discharge of their ministry, therefore, an unity of faith was the plan they were, and did consentaneously work upon.

BUT then, an unity of faith, as the only means of Salvation, being so far conducted, that is, to the end of the Apostles ministry, there remains yet one important question;—to what Church, at what æra, and in what place or country, did Almighty God give a dispensation with this unity of faith, and allow salvation acquirable under various forms of religion and contradictory beliefs? as is at present supposed and maintained by our charitable Protestants.

It is certain, the Apostles themselves were utter strangers to any such dispensation with the faith they had preached, and cursed the intruders upon it, of their days, who attempted to corrupt its purity with their own additions and inventions, the Nicolaists, Cerdonists, the Simonists, and the rest. And St. PAUL, as we heard above, did not refrain to pronounce anathema, even against an Angel from Heaven, who should, if it were possible, insinuate a doctrine, different from what he had taught. The Apostles immediate Disciples, St. Polycarp, St. Ignatius and others, looked on the Marcionists and the rest of the innovators of their time, with equal abhorrence, and cautioned their flocks to be aware of their deceitful

wiles and pernicious errors, as directly repugnant to Apostolic faith, and destructive of salvation. And so, through every succeeding age, down to the epoch of the Reformation, upon the first appearance of any novelty of doctrine, the Church constantly opposed it with the greatest warmth and vigour.

LET then, our present Reformers reconcile as they can, their universal charity of a possibility of Salvation within sects of different persuasions, and contrary tenets of faith and terms of communion, with the rigour of an unity of faith prescribed and delivered by CHRIST to his Apostles, by them propagated among the nations and people of their respective provinces, and since invariably maintained by the Church, till the present days of relaxation, and of unbounded liberty of conscience, introduced by the principles of the Reformation.

HOWEVER, while we see our modern Reformers make a merit of their pretended universal charity, and conceive scandal at our contracted charity (as they are pleased to think it) of confining the road to Salvation within the narrow boundaries of an Unity of Faith; it may be a matter of surprise to hear an abettor of the reforming principles plead strenuously for it: and yet, I apprehend the following extracts from Dr. Pearson, Bishop of Chester, in his Exposition of the ninth article of the Creed, cannot be reconciled to common sense, being understood in any other manner. I will therefore give the reader the Bishop's words faithfully, and at length, as they lie, without any comment upon them.

HE begins with asserting the perpetuity and universality of the Church; which, though not directly affecting its unity, is an introduction to it, and is of too considerable a tendency to be omitted. He ushers in his belief on these heads as follows:

“ WHEN I say, *I believe the Holy Catholic Church*,
 “ I mean,” says he, “ that there is a Church which
 “ is Holy, and which is Catholic, *Page 335. Edit. 4.*
 “ —which is not only an acknowledgement of a Church
 “ which

“ which shall be, but also of that which is, *Page 341.*
 “ —that which was when the Creed began, and was
 “ to continue till the Creed shall end, is proposed to
 “ our belief in every age as being: and thus, ever
 “ since the Church was constituted, the Church itself,
 “ as being, was the object of the faith of the Church
 “ believing. The existence therefore of the Church
 “ of CHRIST (as that Church is before understood by
 “ us, p. 336, that is, as a visible and known society)
 “ is the continuation of it in an actual being, from
 “ the first collection of it in the time of the Apostles,
 “ unto the consummation of all things. A collection
 “ uninterruptedly continued in an actual existence of
 “ believing persons and congregations in all ages,
 “ unto the end of the world. *Page 342.*

“ Now this indeed is a proper object of faith,
 “ because it is grounded only upon the promise of
 “ God. There can be no other assurance of the per-
 “ petuity of this Church, but what we have from him
 “ that built it. The Church is not of such a nature,
 “ as would necessarily, once begun, preserve itself
 “ for ever. Many thousand persons have fallen totally
 “ from the faith professed, and so apostatized from
 “ the Church. Many particular Churches have been
 “ wholly lost, many candlesticks have been removed,
 “ *Page 342.*—but though the Providence of God does
 “ suffer many particular Churches to perish, *Yet the*
 “ *promise of the same God will never permit that all of*
 “ *them at once shall perish.* When CHRIST spoke first
 “ particularly to St. PETER, he sealed his speech with
 “ a powerful promise of perpetuity, saying, *Thou*
 “ *art PETER, and upon this rock I will build my Church,*
 “ *and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
 “ When he spoke generally to all the rest of the
 “ Apostles, *Go teach all nations, baptising them, &c.*
 “ Matt. xxviii. 19. he added a promise to the same
 “ effect—*And lo, I am with you always, even unto the*
 “ *end of the world.* The first of these promises assures
 “ us of the continuance of the Church, because it is
 “ *built*

“ *built upon a rock* — The latter of these promises
 “ gives not only an assurance of the continuance of the
 “ Church, but also the cause of that continuance,
 “ which is the presence of CHRIST. Pag. 342. Where-
 “ fore, being CHRIST does promise his presence unto
 “ the Church, even *to the end of the world*, he does
 “ thereby assure us of the existence of the Church un-
 “ til that time, of *which his presence is the cause*. Indeed
 “ this is *the city of the Lord of Hosts, the city of our God*.
 “ God *will establish it for ever*, as the great Prophet
 “ of the Church has said. Psal. xlviii. 8. Pag. 342.
 “ Upon the certainty of this truth the existence of
 “ the Church has been propounded as an object of
 “ our Faith in every age of Christianity; and so it
 “ shall be still unto the end of the world. Pag. 343.

FROM this avowed profession of the *perpetuity* of the Church, he proceeds to establish it's *universality*.

“ THE next affection of the Church,” says he, “ is
 “ that of Universality — *I believe the holy CATHOLIC*
 “ *Church.*” p. 345. Which universality he expounds
 as follows:

“ Now, being particular Churches could not be
 “ named *Catholic*, as they were particular, in reference
 “ to this or that city, in which they were congregated,
 “ it followeth that they were called *Catholic* by their
 “ coherence and conjunction with that Church, which
 “ was properly and originally called so — *That Church*
 “ *which was built upon the Apostles*, as upon the foun-
 “ dation; congregated by their Preaching and their
 “ Baptising; receiving continued accession, and disse-
 “ minated in several parts of the earth, containing
 “ within it numerous congregations, all which were
 “ truly called Churches, as Members of the same
 “ Church — that Church, I say, was after some time
 “ called the *Catholic Church*; that is to say, the name
 “ *Catholic* was used by the Greeks to signify the
 “ whole. P. 347.

“ AT first then they called the whole Church *Catholic*, meaning no more than this Universal Church; but having that term some space of time, they considered how the nature of the Church was to be universal, and in what that universality did consist.

“ THE most obvious and most general notion of this Catholicism consisteth in the diffusiveness of the Church, grounded on the commission given to the builders of it — *Go teach all nations* — whereby they and their successors were authorised and empowered to gather Congregations of Believers, and so to extend the borders of the Church unto the utmost parts of the earth. The Synagogue of the Jews especially consisted of one Nation, and the public Worship of God was confined to one country — *In Judah was God known*, &c. Pf. lxxvi. 1, 2. The Temple was the only place in which Sacrifices could be offered — But God said unto his Son, *I will give the Heathens for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession*. Pf. ii. 8. And CHRIST commanded the Apostles, saying, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every creature, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*. Luke xxiv. 47.

“ THUS the Church of CHRIST, in it's primary Institution, was made to be of a diffusive nature; and to spread and extend itself from the city of Jerusalem, where it first began, to all the parts and corners of the earth. From whence we find them in the Revelation, crying out to the Lamb, *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every Kindred and Tongue, and People and Nation*. Rev. v. 9. This reason did the ancient Fathers render why the Church was called Catholic; and the nature of the Church is so described in the Scriptures.” Pag. 348.

THIS learned Prelate having proceeded next to shew the true Church of CHRIST to be also Catholic in her teaching all things necessary to Salvation, and in other affections or relations less material, for which I refer the Reader to the Author himself, p. 348. He at last concludes that this Church, which being instituted by CHRIST, was, by his divine promise, to be perpetual—this Church, which, in it's nature, extensiveness, and the comprehensiveness of it's doctrine, is catholic, or universal, that this same is also *only One*; which last truth he proves and enforces as follows :

“ The necessity of believing the *Holy Catholic Church*,
 “ appeareth in this — that CHRIST has appointed it
 “ as the only way unto Eternal Life. We read, at
 “ the first, that *the Lord added to the Church daily such*
 “ *as should be saved.* Acts ii. 47. And what was then
 “ daily done, hath been done since continually.
 “ CHRIST never appointed two ways to Heaven, nor
 “ did he build a Church to save some, and make an-
 “ other institution for other mens Salvation. *There*
 “ *is no other name under Heaven, given among men,*
 “ *whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus,*
 “ Acts iv. 12. And that name is no otherwise given
 “ under Heaven, than in the Church. As none were
 “ saved from the Deluge, but such as were within the
 “ Ark of Noah, framed for their reception, by the
 “ command of God — as none of the first-born of
 “ Egypt lived, but such as were within those habita-
 “ tions, whose door posts were sprinkled with blood,
 “ by the appointment of God, for their preservation —
 “ as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape
 “ the fire or sword, but such as were within the house
 “ of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was
 “ made; *so none shall escape the eternal wrath of God,*
 “ *which belong not to the Church of God.”* Pag. 349,
 350.

THEN, summing up all he had just said in the exposition of this Article, he proceeds thus — “ When
 “ we

“ we profess to believe the Holy Catholic Church,
“ every one is thereby understood to declare thus much:
“ I am fully persuaded, and make a free confession of
“ this, as of a necessary and infallible truth, that CHRIST,
“ by the preaching of the Apostles, did gather unto him-
“ self a Church, consisting of thousands of believing
“ persons, and numerous congregations, to which he
“ daily *added such as should be saved, and will successively*
“ *and daily add unto the same, unto the end of the world:*
“ So that, by virtue of his all-sufficient promise, I am
“ assured that there was, has been hitherto, now is,
“ and hereafter will be, as long as the Sun and Moon
“ endure, A CHURCH OF CHRIST, ONE AND THE
“ SAME. This Church I believe in general Holy, in
“ respect of the Author, end, institution, and admini-
“ stration of it: Particularly in the Members here, I
“ acknowledge it really holy, and in the same here-
“ after perfectly holy. I look upon the Church, not
“ like that of the Jews, limited to one people, confined
“ to one nation, but by the appointment and com-
“ mand of CHRIST, and by the efficacy of his assist-
“ ing power, to be disseminated through all nations —
“ to be extended to all places — to be propagated to
“ all ages — to contain in it all truths necessary to be
“ known — to exact absolute obedience from all men
“ to the commands of CHRIST, and to furnish us with
“ all graces necessary to make any persons acceptable,
“ and our actions well pleasing in the sight of God.
“ And thus, *I believe the Holy Catholic Church.*” Pag.
350, 351.

I HAVE given the Reader the foregoing extracts, from this Protestant Prelate, at length; that he may judge himself of his sentiments, without the help of any comment upon them; and, indeed, they are so plain and explicit, that no comments can place their meaning in a clearer light than they appear in their own naked view. I'll therefore only beg leave to make two or

three obvious remarks, as are directly pertinent to the points I undertook to prove; *viz.* the necessity and unity of Faith, as indispensable conditions of Salvation. These truths he positively affirms, p. 349. of his Exposition, as we have seen above, *viz.* That the necessity of believing the Holy Catholic Church appears in this, That CHRIST has appointed it as the *only way* unto eternal life — that there is no way under Heaven whereby to be saved, but the name of JESUS; and that this is “no otherwise given than in the Church;” which he further proves by his allusions to Noah’s Ark, and other scriptural covenants. As also when he says, presently after, “That none shall “escape the eternal wrath, who belong not to the “Church of GOD.” — When, lastly, he concludes from CHRIST’s promise, that “there was, has been hitherto, now is, and hereafter will be, as long as the “Sun and Moon endure, a Church of CHRIST, ONE, “AND THE SAME” — And when, in a word, that we might not mistake this Church of CHRIST, which he affirms to be *one and the same*, he had told us before, *Expos.* p. 345. That the Catholic Church is it, *viz.* the centre of Unity, by a coherence and conjunction with which, all other particular Churches are comprehended within that denomination — the Church which was built upon the Apostles, as upon the foundation, &c. &c. *Exp.* p. 347.

THE necessity, then, and unity of Faith being supposed, and, I conceive, sufficiently evinced from what has been now offered on this head from all hands, *to wit*, from Scripture, from the Fathers, and even from a learned Prelate of the Protestant Communion, as we have just heard, and that, in a dogmatical instruction, or a professed Exposition of Faith: the next inquiry to be made, and the most important of all, is, In which Sect, Church, or Congregation this One Faith necessary to Salvation is to be found; whether within the Roman Catholic or the Reformed Churches;

Churches : and, if in the latter, as all of them, varying from each other in points of belief, cannot be possessed of this inestimable Treasure, and therefore it can only belong to that Church or Churches, so cemented together in terms of Communion, according, even to Dr. Pearson, as to be *one and the same*; the query is, Which is that Church, so fortunate, as to have hit upon it ?

THESE are important questions ; but yet the resolution whereof may be easily come at : the whole drift of this Essay has been directly tending to it. For, if the Reformation be vain and groundless ; if the impeachments of Errour laid against the Roman Catholic Church are unjust, or, which is the same thing, if the Church was not susceptible of a Reform in point of Faith (which is what we have been endeavouring to prove) then she is, of course, possessed of the Unity and Purity of Faith we are in quest after ; and every Sect or Congregation set up in opposition to her, must be judged destitute of it.

THE Inquiry, therefore, Christian Reader, which I recommend to you, is neither intricate nor at a distance ; but is, in fact, no more than an application of the *afore said Premises* to this consequence.

THIS Inquiry, then, as you tender your Salvation, I intreat you to make ; but to do it seriously and unprejudicedly ; begging, first, the Father of Lights to illuminate you ; and begging with an unfeigned disposition of heart, through a sincere desire to be informed ; and, when informed, resolved to follow the Divine Guide, in spite of every temptation, allurements, or opposition. Without these requisite dispositions, you may search after Truth, and not find it, as CHRIST told the Jews, *they should seek him, and yet die in their sins*, John viii. 21. as they, in effect, sought him, after the suggestions of their corrupt hearts, when, with an unparalleled presumption, they required him, in proof of his being their Messiah, to descend from the Cross,

and to secure himself out of their hands — *If he be the Son of God*, said they, *let him come down from the Cross; and we will believe in him*, &c. Matt. xxvii. 40, 41, 42.

IN the same manner Herod was overjoyed at the sight of CHRIST, when brought to his tribunal, out of a vain curiosity of seeing him work a miracle, but was disappointed of his expectations. And whosoever addresses Almighty God in the like depraved dispositions of mind, in quest after the true Faith, may be equally sure to miscarry in his search: or, if Almighty God, of his infinite mercy, bestows on him his lights, in themselves sufficient to bring him to this knowledge, they cannot but prove unserviceable to him, thro' the obstructions he himself throws in the way: he does not see, because he will not open his eyes, or shuts out the light from them. Almighty God's graces are not of a compulsive nature, "Our Heavenly Physician," says St. Austin, "cures every infirm person who is willing to be cured, but cures none against his will." He is desirous, on his side, of the Salvation of all men, but yet will not save any, but such as have a sincere and effectual will, themselves, to be saved.

PREJUDICE of Education is one of these obstructions to our participating of this Divine Light, as fatal as it is common: thro' this perspective a man looks on his Religion as a kind of paternal inheritance; he takes it as it is come to him from his ancestors, without giving himself any uneasiness concerning it's truth or falshood; and without examining into the grounds and merits of it; or, if he does take any pains that way, they are levelled to no other view than to rivet him faster in his own persuasions, and to strengthen his prepossessions against every other: and yet, it is certain, there can be no plea more repugnant to common sense: none more treacherous and deceitful; because the most monstrous sects; even Mahometans, Jews, and Infidels, have an equal right to the same, and may flatter themselves to be safe under it's shelter;

So that, tho' St. Peter assures us, that *there is no other name under Heaven, in which Salvation is attainable (but the name of JESUS CHRIST, Acts iii.)* yet if Prejudice of Education may be allowed to take place ('tis shocking to say, yet certainly true) there might be salvation possible in Mahomet's name, in Arius's and every impostor's name, Such are the dreadful consequences of this delusive plea.

THIS reflection does also discover to us the weakness of another vain pretence, too frequently made use of by deluded people, to justify a tenacious adhesion to their errors, which, to express it in their own language is, that no one should renounce his baptism, meaning the persuasion in which he was initiated a Christian at that sacred font.

IN order to give a further answer to this frivolous plea, I, first, must premise as an undoubted and inviolable principle, that nothing, however sacred, can become a sanction to an intrinsic evil; nor baptism, therefore, to heresy and error, which, if any thing, must be deemed an intrinsic evil of the blackest die. For example, an Arian, christened and trained up in that erroneous opinion, can no more be judged excusable in adhering to it, because he was baptised therein; than another in embracing it, after having received his baptism in the Catholic Church. I say, secondly, that our baptism, so far from giving a sanction to error, obliges us, by the solemn engagements it lays us under, to renounce and oppose it. These engagements are comprized in the vow of fealty we make to CHRIST on that solemn occasion, implying an obligation of asserting his cause, of espousing and defending the system of faith he has left us, and of oppugning it's contrary errors, and consequently of deserting them, so soon as discovered, if unhappily hampered therein, thro' birth or education. These principles are so self-evident, that, even the Reformers themselves occasionally espouse them in practice, when so often as any
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of a different Communion, whether Catholic or dissenting Protestants, offer themselves candidates to their own Church. they are ever ready with open arms to receive them, and think their baptism within another sect, no obstacle to their change. And indeed, if it were of any weight, it would sap the foundation of the Reformation itself: for the first authors of that Church revolution, when they fell off from their Mother Church, did certainly, in the language of Protestants, renounce their baptism; it being in the Catholic Church, and in the profession of all and each of her tenets, through their sponsors, who answered for them at the sacred font, that they received their spiritual regeneration; and consequently by their own argument, the Reformation from it's very commencement was unwarrantable. If it be replied that they did not renounce their baptism but the errors (supposed) of the Romish Church, they give us the solution to their frivolous argument. Therefore, in a word, our baptism condemns errors, does not justify them; it lays an incumbent obligation upon us to desert error, does not excuse our persisting in it: so vain, weak and ridiculous is this plea; which yet the vulgar sit down content with under the profession of the grossest errors, and which even their teachers are not ashamed to make use of in vindication of them. So unwarrantable then, is prejudice of education in every shape, and insufficient towards excusing an affected ignorance and an erroneous belief.

HUMAN respects, or a shame of departing from the principles a man may unfortunately be engaged in, tho' never so erroneous, and known to be such, is another obstacle to his embracing the truth, as fatal as the former; and has an affinity with it; only with this difference, that *prejudice of education* principally affects the understanding, throwing it into a state of insensibility or blindness, through which a man, being ignorant of the truth, determinately persists in his ignorance; whereas *human respects* occasions a per-

verseness

verfeness of the will, whereby a man knowing the truth, pusillanimously declines submitting to it. The first refembles him to a traveller, who fhuts his eyes, not to look out his road ; the other to the fame, who having his eyes open, and feeing his way, wilfully ftrays out of it.

THERE are few but, within the circle of their acquaintance, have means of associating themfelves with fome of the orthodox faith ; from whose conversation, as well as from books they may incidently light upon, they have frequent opportunities of being difabufed of their errors ; and through the concurrence of the Divine lights, many have found themfelves effectually convicted of them. But, what is the confequence of all thefe promifing beginnings, and favourable advantages, Divine Providence graciously puts before them, of attaining to truth ? why, it may happen, that the erroneous principles they are unhappily engaged in, are hereditary, and therefore it will be deemed an indelible difgrace on themfelves, and their family, to desert what has been the fucceffive belief of their ancestors, time immemorial : a terrible bar to their venturing upon fuch a generous refolution !

THEY themfelves are, perhaps, perfons of fome confideration within their party, and looked upon as props and pillars of their profefion : pride, therefore, in this cafe, interpofes its caveat : and, in fhort, they are fure, by deserting their old principles, of falling under the difpleafure, cenfure, indignation and contempt of all their intimates and afociates of their former communion, who before valued, revered and refpected them—Powerful diffuafives to a mind, otherwife the beft difpofed, from entering upon fuch a religious change. And yet how weak, irrational and injurious to himfelf the one is, in declining to yield to truth, on fuch infufficient motives : how unjuft the other, in abridging his friend of his liberty upon the fame grounds, the nature of
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the thing speaks. For, first, if the principles a man has imbibed from inheritance, education, or any other way, are, in themselves, absolutely erroneous, they are certainly better deserted than kept, and the act is so far from being blameable, that it is to be reputed a point of strict obligation and duty.

AGAIN, the affair of salvation, or the concern of our soul, being properly every one's own affair, that man must be a declared enemy, or a false friend, who were to take upon him to obstruct you in the pursuit of it; or would attempt to divert you from embracing the means, which, in the conviction of your own conscience, you judge to be absolutely necessary, in order to succeed: and you must be equally blind to your own natural interest, to give such worldly respects or considerations the preference to it: and yet, that it is but too often the case, is as certain, as it proves fatal to innumerable souls, and the cause of their final perdition.

EXAMPLE is often another powerful attractive to error, and a strong persuasive to continue in it, being once engaged. For instance, they see among the members of a heterodox communion, persons of rank and fortune; persons reputed wise, learned and good in their way, and therefore instantly conclude it safe to tread in their steps, and to act and believe as they, whom they suppose to be so discerning, that they cannot but know which is the right, and which the wrong; and they think to be so upright and conscientious, that they would not swerve from what they know. *I am not, say they, wiser than such and such, and therefore if they venture their salvation in this way, it is surely safe for me to put my soul to the same hazard* — And, again, if the Religion they profess, happen to be the Religion of the country, by law established, the advantage of numbers will likely be on their side; the members of the Catholic communion, perhaps, very few; many of them obscure, and in every worldly respect, inconsiderable;

ble; and the proselytes gained over to them, chiefly of the lower sort. These observations, judging from outward appearances, are enough to bring the orthodox Belief into contempt, and to raise the credit of the other; but, alas! without the least colour of reason or justice.

THE Jews made the same exception heretofore, against our Blessed Saviour and his doctrine — *Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed in him,* John vii. 48. was their constant cry. No, it was notorious, that our Blessed Lord affected to converse with the poorer sort: multitudes of the poor followed him: of the rich and the literate, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and two or three others only, mentioned in the Gospels, or that we know of. His college of Apostles was composed of twelve poor, ignorant fishermen: He called them his *little Flock*; but yet tells them, that the Kingdom of Heaven was their portion — *Fear not, says he, little flock, because it has pleased your Father to give you a kingdom,* Luke xii. 32. And in another place he adores the orders of Divine Providence, in concealing the mysteries from the wise, and communicating them to the simple, *I confess to thee, O Father, says he, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and proud, and hast revealed them unto little ones.* Matt. xi. 25. CHRIST often insinuates the number of those that are *called* to be many, the *chosen* few. In the parable of the marriage feast, figurating the qualifications of the elect, we find the blind, the crippled and beggars admitted to the nuptials, while the better sort were excluded. By all these parables and examples we are given to understand, that in the election to eternal bliss, there is no respect to persons; that they are not always the great or the wise men, according to the world, who are so with God; and therefore, merely as such, they can be no precedents for us, nor a warrant for our steering by their conduct or belief: the reason is obvious; because the rich, the powerful, the

wise and the learned, are subject to sundry human passions, as well as others; and, perhaps, have stronger incitements to gratify them, than many of less learning, less accomplished, according to the world, or placed in a station of life not so conspicuous. And it is most certain, that the greatest men have been misled by their inordinate passions; and both learning and reason made to ply to their suggestions, in favour of error. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, expressly mentions it to have been the case of the Heathen Philosophers, *who, knowing God, did not glorify him as God — but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened*, Rom i. 21. And the like passions prevailing over the dictates of Virtue, Religion, and Good Sense, make the illiterate and the ignorant so fond of screening themselves under the conduct of such of the learned, as give the most favourable countenance to their own way of thinking and acting. For, so often as a person, in spite of convictions of conscience, continues in an erroneous belief, pretending to justify himself by the example of others, reputed virtuous, religious in their way, and wise; if he will but consult the real dictates of his heart, and will deal with himself candidly and impartially, he will find, that what he obtrudes on the world, or imposes on himself, for his motive of acting, and for the justification of his conduct, is nothing else but a mere cloak, to cover other real motives, such as are human respects, pusillanimity, self-interest, ambition, pride, or some other disorderly passion, which are the secret springs of his actions. And very likely, those very men of reputed probity, religion and learning, under whose example he affects to screen himself, were actuated by the same passions.

If man were totally free from passion, he would be as little tempted to err against faith as to break the commandments. Heresy and Immorality flow from the same source, our irregular appetites, which are

are the greatest obstacles to our attaining to the knowledge of truth, or, it being known, to our embracing it.

THESE passions are comprised, in Holy Scripture, under the following heads — *the concupiscence of the flesh — concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life*; which, otherwise, may be called the *spirit of libertinism — self-interest, and pride*, in it's several shapes or branches.

THAT the spirit of libertinism gave birth, in a great measure, to the Reformation, is well known, and what I have sufficiently shewn in the foregoing Premises: and the same spirit may, no doubt, be a means of retaining many in the profession of it's principles; because a man immersed in his pleasures, would chuse to be of that Religion, which puts the least check or restraint upon their enjoyment: and therefore, while there is this fundamental difference between the Catholic and Reformed Churches, the latter, calculated for ease and luxury, or, at least, rendering the road to Heaven as level as possible; the former making it rugged and difficult, and imposing many injunctions on it's professors, forbidding to flesh and blood; 'tis evident to which side the voluptuous man must be inclined; and nothing but a determined, effectual resolution to quit his pleasures, can take off this bias, and leave him at full liberty to be guided in the choice of his Religion, by the lights of Faith, and the dictates of his Conscience.

AGAIN, when self-interest is the ruling passion, and it happens that Religion interferes with, and is an obstruction to it, it is plain, humanly speaking, which is likely to prevail: I say, considering man's insatiable thirst after riches, and his violent attachment to the goods of this world, there is great odds that Religion is made the sacrifice to Interest: as, for example, first, in a case the most desperate that can happen: where a man is so unfortunately circumstanced, that his livelihood and necessary subsistence, and the

actual support of a wife and family, are connected with, and apparently inseparable from his erroneous profession. Good God! what a crowd of difficulties do not here immediately offer themselves to deter him from abandoning his errors, tho' never so much convinced of them? What a conflict in his breast between nature and grace? What obstacles, seemingly unsurmountable, do not flesh and blood, and the world, throw before him, to obstruct a generous resolution? How many arguments do they suggest to defeat the lights of Faith, and to frustrate the force of Divine Grace? How ingenious is self-love on her side, in seconding these carnal suggestions, by forming a false Conscience, to oppose the dictates of an upright Conscience, guided by the lights of Faith and Divine Grace? flattering him with the lawfulness and reasonableness of continuing as he is, under such desperate circumstances: magnifying, to this purpose, the mercy of Almighty God, or, rather, misrepresenting it, in order to justify his false confidence in it, and glaring presumption?

Thus gained over, by the sophisms of self-love, and the flatteries of corrupt nature, he easily persuades himself that it is more eligible to hazard his soul for the time to come, for the sake of present emoluments, than to secure his eternal welfare, with the loss of a temporal maintenance: he thinks it better to live at ease in this life, at any risk, than to tug to Heaven in rags and poverty, with the additional heart-breaking reflection of leaving behind him a starving family; soothing, alas! illusions of the devil, diametrically contrary to the express declarations of our Blessed Saviour, that *He that doth not hate father and mother, and even his own life, for his sake, he cannot be his disciple!* Luke xiv. 26. Also quite the reverse of the directions, tho' severe indeed, which St. Jerom gives us for our conduct; viz. "to trample on father and mother;" that is to say, to break through every tie of flesh and blood, when they stand

stand in our way to salvation, or are an hindrance to our complying with our duty to God.

To do this, it cannot be denied, requires, in such circumstances, an heroic courage and resolution : a virtue more than human ; and few, very few, are they who attain to it. So great, and, respectively, almost invincible an obstacle to true Faith (without the extraordinary Grace of God) are the allurements of interest, of the world, flesh and blood, and the ties of nature.

AND, even in cases less desperate than that we have just reviewed, we find that convictions of conscience are made to ply to the suggestions of passion ; and Religion sacrificed to Interest. For instance, if the gaining or saving an estate, or, what is more inconsiderable, the shifting off some taxes or penal burdens lying upon it, is put in competition with our Faith, dreadful experience convinces us how much the former often preponderate in our affections, and are apt to determine our choice. These observations amount to little less than a literal proof of that terrible sentence pronounced by our Blessed Saviour against the Rich — that *It is easier for a camel to pass thro' the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* Matt. xix. 24. Which is as much as to say, that whenever our affections are immoderately set on the world, they are observed to be a certain impediment to the service of God, and almost an invincible obstacle to our securing the salvation of our souls. The reason hereof is manifest ; because no passion throws a greater mist before the eyes of our understanding, or engrosses so much our heart and affections, as an unsatiable thirst after, or a violent attachment to worldly goods and riches. Disinterestedness is, therefore, a disposition previously requisite to the choice of our Religion, in order to make a good one, and sure.

PRIDE is also another effectual obstacle to a good choice : but, omitting the various other branches and species

species of pride, I only mean to consider it here, so far as it implies opiniativeness or self-sufficiency, and renders a man full of himself, and conceited with his own knowledge and wisdom, in which respect it becomes chiefly an impediment to his search after Truth. *Knowledge*, says St. Paul, *puffs up*; meaning a knowledge stripped of faith, humility, and piety: without these guides it certainly runs astray: without these fences it becomes a sure prey to the tyranny of pride; and is no better than it's servant or bond-slave.

EVEN Reason itself, unless restrained by the reins of these virtues, like a headstrong or unmanaged horse running away with his rider, hurries a man beyond the bounds of all reason; and therefore we find, by experience, that to try Religion by pure human reason, is the means of reasoning it away: too great refinements in dogmatical matters lead directly to skepticism and atheism.

THE sacred Penmen are, therefore, continually cautioning us against the presumptuous attempts of squaring our Faith to Reason, or according to the lights of human wisdom. *The wisdom of the world*, says St. Paul, *is folly with Almighty God*. 1 Cor. iii. 19. And he represents the Evangelical Doctrine of the Cross *unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness*. 1 Cor. i. 23. For, neither the sublimeness of the mysteries of the Christian Faith, nor their obscurity and incomprehensibility, nor the humility of the Cross, are adapted to the vain notions of human reasoning. Reason is, consequently, no further to be consulted, in matters of faith, than to make us sensible that they are above reason, and to direct us to a sure infallible Guide, which is the Church; the repository of true Faith, and all the necessary means of Salvation; and to convince us of the obligation and necessity of submitting to her decisions in all things relating to Faith.

IN short, it is evident, that pride, self-sufficiency, or too great a reliance on our own knowledge and reason,

reason, as well as the twofold concupiscence we have spoken of, the *concupiscence of the flesh*, and the *concupiscence of the eyes*, lust, and self-interest, are essential obstacles to a free inquiry into Religion. For, it is said, *God gives grace to the humble, and resisteth the proud.* Jam. iv. 6. *The sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 14. — And, *Where our treasure is, there our heart will also be.* Matt. vi. 21. And therefore, a man passionately attached to this world, and cleaving to it's riches, is blinded to what belongs to the next; being under the government of his concupiscible appetites, he cannot be at liberty to seek after and embrace a faith, whose morals run directly counter to their corrupt suggestions, and whose laws tend to a total subversion of their tyrannical usurpation.

AND yet, upon our making an impartial inquiry after this one true Faith, to which these passions are so manifest an impediment, our eternal happiness or misery entirely depends; and therefore, as I said above, it behoves us to use in it the utmost sincerity and diligence; and to remove every obstacle to this desirable end. If the recovery of a temporal estate were the object of your pursuit, you would be thought a madman, if you did not give it all the attention, assiduity, and care, that laid in your power: and yet the affair in hand as much more deserves your regard, above every worldly concern, and outweighs all temporal prospects and advantages, as finite is exceeded by infinite, time by eternity; and fleeting momentary pleasures by everlasting torments: for, *What will it avail a man to gain the whole world with the loss of his soul?* Matt. xvi. 26. The disparity of one and the other, is too wide to suffer any bartering upon it, or demur. What, therefore, you will wish to have done, when the near approach of death removes the veils of your passions from before your eyes, and discovers every object naked and undisguised, as it is in itself,
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that do at present; examine and resolve — examine and prove your Faith; whether it be the one true Faith of CHRIST, and the road to salvation pointed out by him; and if, on examination, you are convinced that you are out of this true way, resolve to get into it at any cost, and in spite of all rubs or obstacles the flesh, the world, or the devil can put before you.

TAKE care of becoming like the foolish Virgins, who had the oil of faith and good works to provide for their lamps, when the Bridegroom appeared, and therefore were excluded the nuptial banquet — Take warning from the description the wise man gives of some after-penitents, who, seeing, at the last day, the Just going to the enjoyment of eternal bliss, which they themselves had forfeited through their own wilfulness, will break out into these unprofitable lamentations, “ We, senseless wretches! who looked on their
“ lives as folly, and terminating in disgrace, be-
“ hold, how they are now reputed among the chil-
“ dren of GOD, and their portion is with the Saints.”
Sap. 5. v. 4.

’TIS in every man’s power, on this side the grave, with Almighty God’s help, which is always at hand, to ward against this fruitless after-repentance, by repenting within time, when it is seasonable, and will be acceptable.

THE first step to it is Faith, according to that of St. Paul, *He that would have access to GOD, it behoves him first to believe.* And again, *Without faith it is impossible to please GOD.* Heb. xi. 6. — and now is the time to make an inquiry into this *one true Catholic Faith*, requisite to salvation. Providing you do it heartily and sincerely, with an unfeigned disposition of mind, desiring to be informed; and when informed, as I said before, resolved, in spite of every difficulty and opposition, to follow your information; you need not doubt of the lights of Heaven to conduct you to this happy

happy term of your desires. And, if my feeble endeavours in this Essay happen to be of any service to you, Christian Reader, towards this desirable purpose, I have all I aimed at, and all I wish; and therefore, with the prayer I set out, with that I conclude ——
May GOD, in his infinite mercy bestow upon it this blessing, and on you the Grace to reap your advantage from it.





A WORD of ADVICE TO THE CATHOLIC READER.

BUT while we are laudably solicitous for the return of strayed sheep into the *one fold* of CHRIST, where, and no where else, he will acknowledge them for his; and to the *unity of Faith, without which*, we have just heard the Apostle tell us, that *it is impossible to please God*; it behoves us who, thro' the special mercy of Almighty God, have been privileged with the grace of this *one, sole-saving faith*, to take care not to forfeit the advantage of our prerogative, by leading a life unworthy of our profession; disgracing a good belief by a bad practice: for, *a faith unfruitful of good works is dead, and will avail us nothing.* Jam. ii. 20, 26.

THE Jews, heretofore, presuming on their respective prerogative of being the chosen people of God, and betrayed by their false prophets into a mistaken trust on an extraordinary Providence, on account of their having the material Temple among them for his public service, at the same time that they neglected the internal service of the heart, the divine Commandments) thro' this illusion they often broke out into these vain exclamations, *We are the elect people, the Temple of the Lord, &c.* Jer.

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BUT Almighty GOD sent his Prophet Jeremiah to undeceive them of this gross error, ordering him to stand in the porch of the Temple, and to repeat to them often this instructive lesson: *Thus says the Lord of hosts, the GOD of Israel — Amend your ways, and works, and I will dwell with you in this place: (otherwise) Trust not in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, &c.* Jer. vii.

Now I fear there are many nominal members of the True Church of CHRIST, at this time of day, who are carried away by a like deceit, these deluded Jews laboured under; those, I mean, who glory in the name of *Catholic*, at the same time that, to frame a judgment of their profession from their way of living, you might be at a loss to know whether they are *Christians*. The consequence of this illusion is two-fold; both highly fatal in their own nature: one to themselves; the other to the Church they have the happiness to be members of: It is fatal to themselves, by lulling them into a false security on the integrity of their faith, while they neglect the purity of it's morals; content in being materially within the pale of the Church, regardless of it's precepts and discipline; which, if not atoned for by a timely repentance, proves their final perdition. 'Tis injurious to the Church itself, by bringing her into discredit among her enemies, and giving them a handle to slander her principles.

'Tis only in this second acceptation, that the fatal evil has a relation to the subject of this essay. In this respect, therefore, it may be incumbent on me to take notice of it here, or at least apologizes for my presuming to mind every Catholic of the dreadful consequence, and cautioning him against it.

EXAMPLE has ever been observed to operate more powerfully on mens minds than words: the most persuasive arguments lose their weight, and often miscarry entirely, coming from one who is thought to be imposing on your belief, what he does not believe him-

self. This is particularly experienced in religious matters, whether with regard to mysteries of faith, or moral duties. For instance, a person deporting himself in the Church, before the Blessed Sacrament, with as much heedlessness and irreverence, as if he was in the market-place; were he to go about, at that time, to display the proofs of the Real Presence, and to attempt to make converts to its belief, when his actual misbehaviour so visibly betrays his own infidelity, would be exploded and laughed at.

IN the same manner a preacher is likely to make but little impression on his audience, let the truths he delivers be never so solid, and enforced by all the strength of human eloquence, whilst his own actions give the lye to his words. And, in a word, a man who leads a libertine life, looses the reins to his passions, and abandons himself to every kind of viciousness, would in vain endeavour to restrain others from the same irregularities, and to inculcate the practice of the contrary virtues; or to cry up the sanctity and perfect system of pure morality subsisting in the Church, of which he boasts to be a member. He must, I say, first appear to be convinced himself of the truths he would recommend, before he can hope to convince any one else.—Nothing more conducive to this effect than example; his example must therefore precede his words.

WE are placed here, as a spectacle to God, to the Angels, and to men, to God, as the Author of our being, demanding our homage and strict compliance with the end of our existence.—To the Angels, as our guardians and helpers, to the fulfilling this great duty, and as witnesses to our fidelity or infidelity in the discharge of it.—To Men, as mutually aiding to one another by words and example, to the same intent.

Now, in a precedent controversy *Chap. 9. Sect. 1.* we showed that the whole system of Christian morality, and the sum of our duty to God, consist in the Commandments and the Evangelical Counsels. We
also

also made it appear, that the Catholic Church pays a just regard to the Counsels, as well as to the Commandments, both in theory and practice, by words and examples; while the Reformed Churches, on the contrary, have, in a manner, lain them aside. The Church respects them in words by her dogmatical instructions and recommendations of these virtues. She also produces examples of them in the multitudes of her members, who, by the help of God, reduce them into practice. Yet, (to our regret be it spoken) it cannot be denied, but there are too many who practically renounce this Evangelical morality. For tho' 'tis true, what I then observed, that the perfection of the Counsels are not binding in themselves, nor affecting indiscriminately, or in the same degree, persons of every state and condition; yet, it is also certain that, to act directly contrary to them, is allowable to none, which, nevertheless, as I say, to the great detriment of Religion, and the scandal of many, is but too frequently the case, as is notorious from sundry instances in almost every station of life, and relatively to every Evangelical Counsel.

For example, Evangelical poverty, by a total renunciation of our goods and properties which our Blessed Saviour recommends to us, as the complement of Christian perfection, has so little the attention of many worldly-minded Christians, that the contrary passion of hoarding up wealth, and acquiring riches, at any rate, seems to be their Idol, and to have seized full possession of their hearts. Such are many tradesmen, who suffer themselves to be so entangled in their temporal concerns, as to allow no time for the main and only necessary concern of all, their eternal welfare. Such are, much more those, who set no bounds to their lust of lucre; but, by double-dealing, over-reaching, and every sinister method, endeavour to advance their fortunes. Now, for these to affect to talk of the truth and purity of our Religion, is mere cant and hypocrisy. They ought, first, to approve themselves

themselves honest men, before they make a boast of being Catholics. Religion, else, is brought into scorn and contempt, and becomes a cloak to cover vices a moral heathen would be ashamed of.

THE barefaced licentiousness of many Catholics, and their loose libertine lives, as they are diametrically opposite to the counsel of chastity, so strongly recommended by CHRIST himself, and repeated by St. PAUL, the faithful interpreter of his Divine Master's doctrine; so are they no less the occasion of bringing disgrace on themselves and their profession. For, what idea can any one frame of the sanctity of our religion, and the purity of its morals, by casting their eyes upon such unworthy members of it, who abandon themselves to lewdness, and are the very sink of wickedness.

THE detestable habits of cursing and swearing: the flagrant breaches of the law of charity, in the several species of backbiting, slander, animosities and revenge as they run counter to the very essence of holiness, and are the subversion of morality, so are they a certain subject of scandal to our neighbour, and bring Religion itself into discredit, as often as they are seen to prevail amongst its professors. And, when such are farther remarked to join that extreme of viciousness with an outward show of devotion, by going customarily to Church, at set times of public service: by conforming materially to her general regulations and points of discipline; and even presuming to accede to the Sacraments, without shewing any fruits of amendment; what impression, can this odd inconsistency of behaviour be likely to make, on the minds of our adversaries, than that our system of religion is a mere farce, or outward form; or, what is worse, superstition and deceit? nor is it much to be wondered at, that even the Sacraments themselves, though the use thereof is prescribed by the Church, according to the intent of CHRIST's divine institution, as a remedy for, and antidote to sin, or a means of reclaiming sinners

sinners from their vicious habits; should, through a contrary abuse of them, be maliciously misconstrued by our enemies, into a license to commit sin, or, at least, as an encouragement to repeat our transgressions with less restraint. We had a recent instance of this misconstruction of the Sacrament of Penance, from a pastoral letter of a learned Protestant Prelate, which I have quoted above, c. iv. where he represents the sacramental absolution as no more than a mere cordial, to sooth the uneasiness of a guilty conscience; and to palliate, not to cure, our disorders. And though the charge, as I there shewed, is unjust, and highly injurious to the Divine Institution; yet the fruitless use many are observed to make of these means of grace is what, no doubt, has given occasion to the slander.

SELF-DENYING principles, so strongly recommended by CHRIST, and enforced by his Church, as we have seen before, have no chance of meeting with any better fate than the other parts of her discipline; *to wit*, to become the subject of jest and raillery to her enemies, if regard be had to the deportment of some of her children, who swerve so widely from them, as not to comply with her fasts, and the like self-denials of strict obligation. For, such is the depravity of man's mind, and the violent bias of his judgment to the side of corruption; the evil example of a few, transgressing and making slight of the best intentioned regulations and institutions, prevail over the good example of greater numbers, living up conformably to them.

I wish I could say, that the practice of humility, equally inculcated by our Blessed Lord, both by word and example, had engrossed the attention of the generality of Christians, that is, of those who pretend to the honour of being his Disciples. But while we see many professors of the Gospel running into all lengths of vanity and prodigality, giving into every kind of ambitious views, boundless in their desires and
lawless

lawless in the methods they make use of to compass them; some grasping at honours, riches, and power, that are not their due; others, intrusted by Providence with these privileges, making the worst use of them, by squeezing and oppressing the poor, by looking down with scorn and disdain on their inferiors and dependents, as if they were not made of the same mould, or were of a different species. While many again are so transported with their advantages of birth and fortune, as to seem to think they will accompany them beyond their grave; it will be no rash judgment to say these are so far from having attained to the perfection of the Evangelical virtue of humility, or of giving proofs of a zealous attachment to it that they are not even provided with such a share and tincture of it, as is requisite to the profession of a good Christian. Far be it from me, by this hint, to entertain a levelling spirit. I am sensible that Almighty God has placed us here in different ranks and stations of life, and that it behoves every one to be resigned to that, which has fallen to his lot. I know that, as the beauty of the universe consists of the variety, order and symmetry of its parts, jointly concurring to the frame and ornament of the whole; that as there is a wonderful oeconomy established by an infinite wisdom in the animal part of the Creation, in a gradation of their several specific excellencies, from the highest to the lowest, from man, the Lord and Master of all, to the meanest insect, in their reciprocal connections with one another, and their co-operating together to the universal good: so the harmony of human society consists of a similar distinction of states and conditions, in which some are rich, some poor, some appointed to command, others to obey; each moving in his own sphere, and acting in his proper province: and therefore that, to attempt to invert this order, would be to oppose the Will of God, and to traverse the wise dispositions of Divine Providence; to disturb the

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the harmony of this social community, and to throw the whole world into a chaos of confusion. I know that it is the duty of inferiours, enjoined by CHRIST himself, and repeated by the Apostle St. PETER, to respect, reverence and obey those, who are placed over them. *Servants obey your masters*, 1 Pet. ii. and that for persons of condition to support their respective rank with a becoming state, is both lawful and commendable.

BUT how to observe this decorum, with due moderation, in their several situations of life is the difficult point: however, in order to succeed therein an attention to the structure and frame of the human body, and the distinct operations of it's organs and members, may serve, I apprehend as a help and direction. In this the head, being the most honourable and principal part, and the seat of understanding, commands the hands, feet, and the other ministerial members; yet without disdain or contempt of them in their slavish capacity: And the feet, hands, and the other servile parts, on their side, perform their respective functions, without reluctance or envy of their capital superiour. In return for these offices, if the feet are tired, lame or wounded, the head is contriving to procure them relief; the eyes examine the complaint; the hands are busy and active in subministring the service, depending on them, to their slavish partners; and the heart and every other part sympathizes in the pain.

THUS, in the body of human society, the capital and subordinate members are instructed how to deport themselves, so as to be aiding to one another, and mutually conducing to the happiness of the whole community; viz. that one part preside without haughtiness, and the other be dependent and subservient, without envy or repining.

As an additional incitement to keep up this decorum and moderation in our conduct, it will be proper to

consider in what manner Divine Providence has placed us in this terrene mansion; to wit, that we are here, as it were, in the stage of life, where each one has his part to act, and as I took notice before, has God, the Angels, and even our own companions and fellow creatures, witnesses and spectators of our well or ill performance: in which respect, we shall not be called to account, what part we have acted, but how well we have acted it. And therefore, if the inferiour has played his part more in character, more according to the spirit of an humble Christian, than his superiour he will be most applauded and best rewarded. *He that exalts himself, says our Blessed Saviour, shall be humbled; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* It, indeed, can't be denied that the great ones of the world have the most difficult part to play: their situation is certainly the most slippery and dangerous. For, to be placed on the pinnacle of honour, without being too much elated; to manage the reins of power with due moderation, to be possessed of the advantages of birth and fortune, without being too passionately attached to them, is a mean, which few are so happy as to observe. But yet they are not unfurnished with weighty motives, and the strongest inducements, besides what we have already offered, to bring them to this happy mean and moderation of conduct. The example of our Blessed Lord himself, who was the emblem of humility and meekness; who set such a sovereign contempt on all worldly greatness, that he would be poor himself, would converse with the poor, ever caressed the poor; and pronounced *blessed the poor in spirit*, and *meek and humble of heart*, must be a spur and incentive to the practice of this Evangelical virtue to every professor of the Gospel and zealot for Christianity, or even a pretender to the very name.

If it be necessary to have recourse to other motives to retain us within bounds and in the due sentiments of Christian humility, let us only look forwards to what man usually dreads to think of, the period of life, death:

death : and alas ! we have not far to look for it ; it treads on our heels. See, then, how this implacable foe of mankind with an impartial hand, without respect to persons, shoots it's unerring dart at every individual, and lays all human race upon the same level, as well the rich as the poor, the gentleman and tradesman, the king and beggar : no one has power to evade it's blow.—Can we need any other consideration to lower our towering thoughts and to check our pride : He that is Lazarus to day, poor, indigent, despicable and covered with ulcers, being removed out of this state of trial, may be to-morrow reposing in Abraham's bosom ; whilst Dives who, rolling in plenty here, denied him the crumbs falling from his table ; by a dreadful reverse of condition, swimming in a lake of flames, will be refused there a drop of water to cool his scorching tongue.

BUT, even, confining our contemplations within the enjoyment of time, and to the goods of birth, nature, and fortune, which we actually possess ; what are these but gratuitous gifts from a liberal and all-bountiful hand ? *What hast thou*, says the Apostle, *which thou hast not received ; and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it ?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. They are only so many talents lodged in our hands, or rather lent us, wherewith to negotiate our salvation, and we must be accountable for both principal and interest ; and therefore the greater our debt, the greater will be the accounts we shall have to make up with our Divine Creditor : considerations, if well weighed, that afford more cause of terrour, than incentives to vanity : and they have, effectually, made such an impression on many virtuous souls, as to influence them to renounce generously all these advantages of birth and fortune (conscious of the danger of exceeding in the full enjoyment of them) in order to serve God in an humble retirement, totally disengaged from these worldly encumbrances. And, tho' this was complying with the perfection of the Evangelical counsel, which is not

binding; yet the fundamental part of humility, consisting in a moderate use of the gifts of Providence, is what no one can be dispensed with; and whosoever has it not, let his faith be ever so pure and untainted, may at best be reputed a sound believer, but will be a bad Christian.

BUT, in the conduct of many of the Church's members, so opposite to the profession and character of an humble Christian, is no small prejudice to her cause; the supine stupidity, insensibility in God's service, and indolence of others, can be no means of advancing it; *to wit*, Persons so taken up with the affairs of the world, having their hearts divided between it's distractions and amusements, sometimes absorpt in business; at others, rolling in a circle of pleasures: now intent on getting money, then contriving how to spend it; that amidst such a multitude and variety of worldly occupations, they can hardly prevail on themselves to afford any time to the great and necessary business of All, the concern of their Soul, and to make a provision for their eternal welfare: One would imagine that Heaven had sunk beneath their care, and was become the pursuit only of recluses; and therefore, no wonder that the helps leading to that port of bliss, piety, and the practices of Religion, are by these either wholly lain aside, or postponed to every idle humour and worldly avocation.

Now, that the conduct of such is injurious to their own souls; and that it is an indignity offered to their great Creator, is unquestionable; because we are enjoined to serve him with decency and fervour. *Be fervent in spirit*, says St. Paul, *serving the Lord*, Rom. xii. 11. and with respect to the Catholic Church, they have the happiness to be members of, that it is, at least, so far injurious to her, of not being the means of raising her credit, nor of furthering her cause, by the edification of the faithful, and the conversion of the unfaithful, is equally certain; though it must, indeed,

indeed, be confessed, this desirable good is more directly obstructed by other means.

I HAVE observed in a foregoing controversy, that the zeal of souls, ever conspicuous in the Catholic Church, is one of her distinguished marks from all other sects and congregations; and blessed be God, there are instances to be produced from all ages and æras of the Church, of this Apostolic spirit surviving in multitudes of her Children, to the infinite benefit of innumerable souls. But, yet, we can't be so partial to ourselves, not to own, that there may be a want of this zeal in some, and that those, who are possessed of this zeal, may be impeded in the exertion of it by others. I abstract in this reflection from such, as are so unfortunate to dishonour the character of a Christian and a Catholic, by a disorderly life, or even by apostacy; their case is more to be lamented, than to be wondered at; for, while men are men, while we are subject to human passions, it may be expected that these scandals and disasters will happen. CHRIST himself foreboded the dreadful evil, and forewarned us against it: *It must needs be, says he, that scandals come; but nevertheless, wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh*, Matt. xviii. 7. *God found depravity among the Angels in Heaven*, Job. Adam was not proof against corruption in Paradise; and Judas prevaricated in the school of CHRIST. And, therefore, no state is so holy as to be exempt from temptation, or an insurance to us of not sinking under it. But, I say, abstracting from these deplorable examples of human weakness, the glory of the Church may be eclipsed, and it's progress retarded by other evils, equally fatal in their consequence.

THE evil most to be dreaded of this kind, and a certain subject of scandal, so often as it happens, is the spirit of dissension, when found to have crept in among the professors of the orthodox faith, and that they, instead of sanctifying their faith by charity, without

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which, tho' our faith be strong enough *to remove mountains, we are nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Instead of cultivating that peace, which the Word Incarnate brought with him upon earth, sending his Angels, messengers of these happy tidings, to proclaim, at his sacred Nativity, *Peace to men of good will*, Luke iii. 14. That these, I say, are seen, on the contrary, to forfeit this Heaven-born blessing tendered to them, by becoming sowers of discord, is the most dreadful of evils.—It were to be wished that the case we are lamenting, was merely imaginary, and what had never come to pass within the pale of the true Church of CHRIST, and among his followers, to whom he has enjoined mutual charity and unanimity, as the characteristic of their belonging to him. *By this*, says CHRIST, *shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have a love one for another*, John xiii. 35. It were, at least, to be wished, that so often as any, who have the honour to be of the number of CHRIST's disciples, that is to say, Catholic Christians, do forfeit this badge and mark of their dignity, a curtain could be drawn before them to cover their shame; but alas! while flagrant instances of intestine schisms and divisions, in several ages of the Church, stand upon record, it is in vain to dissemble them, and we have no more left than to deplore past evils, and to beg of God to preserve his Church from the like disasters for the future. For, though such dissensions do not intrench on the integrity of her faith; and that therefore they can give her enemies no room to reproach her on that head; yet they, undoubtedly, break through Evangelical charity, which is the *band of perfection*, (Colos. iii. 14.) and the richest gem of her spiritual diadem; in default of which, she ceases to appear with her wonted lustre and dignity; the advancement and progress of Religion are thereby greatly obstructed, and the authors of such turbulent proceedings, under whatsoever cloak they affect to disguise them, have ever been looked upon and execrated as disturbers

disturbers of the public weal and happiness, and pests of the community.

It happened among the Christians of Corinth, as the Apostle rebuked them, that the Neophytes of that infant Church, carried away with more zeal than discretion, had professed too passionate an attachment to their respective Pastors, who had been the instruments to the Divine Mercy, in bringing them into the fold of CHRIST, and the cause next to GOD, of that ineffable blessing; one commending Apollo, another giving the preference to Paul, and a third extolling Cephas: but the Apostle was no sooner informed of these invidious distinctions, than his zeal was warmed with a just dislike and indignation. *Was then, says he reproving them, was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptised in the name of Paul?* 1 Cor. i. 13. But, if he was so much alarmed at a mere indiscretion in these new converts, the folly of immoderate fervour, and hearts overflowing with gratitude to the authors of their happiness, their spiritual fathers, *who begot them in Christ*; what would he have said if, not confining themselves to a mere preference of affection and esteem for their respective Pastors, they had gone a step farther, in fomenting divisions and setting up parties, one against the other; if one had opposed Apollo in his ministry, another had depreciated Cephas; and a third had disturbed him, St. Paul himself, in the exercise of his Apostolic functions?

WHAT would he have said if, living in other æras of the Church, he had been witness of the several intestine schisms which grievously distracted her, and rendered her the scorn and derision of her enemies? What if, at other times, he had seen the harmony of her œconomy disturbed, though in a less degree, thro' an over-weening attachment, of some of her children, to Pastors of one particular sort or denomination, in prejudice to those of another, not unlike that of the Christians of Corinth, tho' less excusable, because in
it's

it's cause more ridiculous, in it's progression more uncharitable, and it's end oftentimes disastrous; viz. taking it's rise from a prejudiced education, from groundless prepossessions, or from a disagreement in school opinions; when having warmed their heads with noisy disputes about nothing, they sharpened their hearts with rancour, and retaining ever after these first impressions, they, at last, made it a kind of party affair, and by industriously whispering about their little low prejudices, endeavoured to make proselytes to their own way of thinking, to alienate their minds from those, they had conceived a dislike to themselves, and to discredit their zealous labours in the common cause? What, I say, could the Apostle have said to such uncharitable proceedings of the flock of after-times, when he found a mere indiscretion of a mistaken zeal in his own flock so blameable? What judgment can we ourselves put upon them? I am sure they can't be looked on as resulting from an Apostolic spirit, or through a real concern for the cause of CHRIST and his Church; and therefore it must be concluded, when such divisions have ever prevailed among her members, *Inimicus homo hoc fecit*, that *The enemy of mankind* was the author of the mischief, Matth. xiii. 28. who taking advantage of man, whilst he was *asleep*, in the profound sleep of ignorance and a mistaken conscience, or his mind clouded with passion and prejudice (which those reputed virtuous, are not always sufficiently fenced against) *oversowed cockle among the wheat*, Matt. xiii. 25. and stifled the precious grain of peace and unanimity with the tares of dissension. I say, the evil could not flow from any other source, than these subtle practices of the common enemy. For, are not all ministers of the Church, of every sort, fellow labourers in the vineyard? Are they not so many soldiers of JESUS CHRIST, only of different denominations and regiments? Why, then, any odious distinctions betwixt one and the other? Why any unreasonable dislikes

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dislikes and prejudices? Are not they again all engaged in the same cause, fighting the same battles of the Lord, actuated by the same principles, and tending to the same end; What a deplorable thing, then, that there should be any to be met with, among true believers, who should make it their business, as it were, to discourage this Evangelical work, and to obstruct it's success? For what else are they doing, when they industriously discredit the workmen themselves of whatsoever denomination they be, who are usefully employing their labours, according to their calling, for their neighbour's good? How still more deplorable, if any should so far give way to passion, as to rend the seamless garment of CHRIST'S Church, by fomenting open schisms and divisions? Is it not, therefore, evident that none but the common enemy of mankind can be at the bottom of these mischiefs, whenever they happen?

THE truth of this will be more manifest, and the evil greatly aggravated, if it be remembered that the instruments Satan makes use of for his malignant purposes, are generally the weak and the ignorant, or those who have little virtue and merits of their own to recommend them; and that therefore the good and the virtuous have always been made the objects of their invidious proceedings: if such machinations are found to have been practised only against those, who are devoted by their calling to the service of their neighbour, and who by their distinguished zeal, and unwearied labours, have approved themselves faithful to the trust reposed in them. And, therefore, to be concerned in such practices, what other appearance could it ever have, than of entering, as it were, into alliance with the common disturber of peace and unity, and to have been, seemingly, in confederacy with the avowed enemies of the Church, by oppressing the warmest assertors of her cause, and their most formidable opponents? A consequence of so evil a tendency, and implying such a contradiction to our profession as Christians and Catholics

lies, that we could not believe it were possible such troubles had ever happened within the pale of the Church, if authentic records had not transmitted to us the most melancholy instances of them. And as they were always attended with scandal to the faithful, and became the subject of obloquy to the enemies of the Church, they ought for ever to be a warning to her children not to give way to passions and prejudices, that may be productive of such fatal consequences.

DIVERSITY of sentiments, and contests in matters of an indifferent nature may, no doubt, subsist between the most virtuous, without any breach of charity or disedification to our neighbour; or without grounding any cause of discord among others, who may be inclined to take part on either side of the debate. St. Paul had an innocent contest with St. Barnaby, which St. Jerom mentioning, makes so slight of, as to say, that the voyage of the one by sea separated them, whom the Gospel united. He himself had a dispute with St. Austin, which was maintained with firmness, on both sides, yet with charity; without disedification to the faithful, and without giving thereby any advantage over them to the enemies of the Church, in whose cause they were inseparably united. I wish that the several differences, which have arisen amongst the members of the Church, at other times, had been always carried on with the same moderation: I wish that, as long as the Church shall have a being, her professors may be actuated by the spirit of a St. Paul, a St. Jerom, a St. Austin, and the rest; may inherit their charity, may breathe their meekness, and copy their humility.

THERE can be no one but must be ready to join with me in this prayer; and I'll close it with the divine lesson, the beloved Apostle of our Lord was wont to inculcate to his disciples: *Children, said he, love one another.* But then, take also along with you his reason for repeating to them incessantly the same doctrine; *It is the command, says he, of our Lord, and if*

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you do but observe it, it is sufficient : a speech truly worthy of CHRIST's beloved disciple.

STEERING, then, by this Divine command, we shall lead upon earth the life of the blessed in Heaven, who are absorpt and swallowed up in an ocean of love : we shall thus be happy within ourselves, and we shall have the additional comfort, in a point so material and so strongly enjoined by CHRIST himself to all his followers, as is the precept of charity, of placing the Church out of the reach of insult from her virulent enemies.

ALAS ! she is injured enough and sorely afflicted at the personal scandals, aforementioned, as often as they happen, which it is out of her power to prevent, the dissoluteness of many of her rotten members ; who, by demeaning themselves in a manner inconsistent with the purity of morals prescribed by our holy faith, practically betray it. And as she is thus, in some degree, disgraced by the depraved manners of bad Catholics ; her cause, as I also before observed, is neglected to be maintained, and her Interest to be advanced through the sterile uncommunicative virtue, I should say rather, the languid devotions, sluggish exercises, and little edifying deportment of tepid ones ; who, nevertheless, because they perhaps are just in their dealings with their neighbour, and lead a life seemingly harmless and inoffensive, are therefore, by the world, usually miscalled good men ; when, if we were to canvass narrowly their actions, and sum up impartially their goodness, it would be found that they have no better title to that commendation, than that they are not notoriously bad.

So it is, dear Christian Reader, even goodness may be blameable, when it is too contracted, or out of character, that is, an inactive goodness, where action may be due, and is expected : *to wit*, we are not born to ourselves, but to be also serviceable to our neighbour, both by word and example : it is a duty All owe to one another, as social beings, particularly as

Christians; and indispensably so, when it is become a special engagement of our calling. 'Tis a debt we, also, owe to the Church; because, on the deportment of her members, her credit, in a great measure, depends.

WE shall fully answer all these essential purposes, if we aim at the sublime degree of perfection our blessed Saviour recommends to us — *So to let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Eternal Father, who is in Heaven*, Matt. v. 16. that is to say, being placed, as it were, on the Candlesticks of CHRIST's Church, our virtues should be so conspicuous, that even our enemies cannot but discover in them the pure faith of the Church, the sanctity of her morals, and the œconomy and beauty of her discipline — seeing them will be compelled to admire them, and to acknowledge in them the invisible hand of God, beginning, conducting, and finishing this spiritual edifice, this perfect system of faith and morality; and to give the glory thereof to the Divine Artificer — admiring them, will be stimulated to associate themselves to us, in the profession of this one and the same Faith, and the observance of the same Evangelical Morality — Thus verifying what our blessed Lord pre-ordained, and foretold should come to pass, from time to time, with regard to the future increase of his Church, by the reduction of it's rebellious children and unbelievers into the bosom of it, when he said, *Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them, also, I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd*, John x. 16. Which, God grant, may be daily and fully accomplished, to the comfort of the faithful; to the confusion of obstinate Infidels and unrelenting Heretics; to the present glory of the Church Militant on earth, and to the perpetual joy of the triumphant in Heaven. *Amen.*



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A P P E N D I X

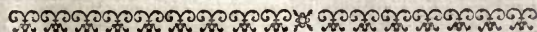
T O T H E

Important Inquiry;

C O N C E R N I N G

COMMUNION under One Kind.

Whosoever shall eat the Bread, or drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. 1 Cor. xi. 27.



THE HISTORY OF THE

APPENDIX

TO THE

Important Inquiry

CONCERNING


GOVERNMENT AND THE

RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE

OF THE UNITED STATES



THE INTRODUCTION.


 N the Review we have taken of the pretended Reformation in the foregoing Essay, I flattered myself that I had passed by no material Impeachment lodged by our adversaries against the Church, uncanvassed, unrefuted; that I had omitted no consideration of any weight, or that could be judged requisite, in order to lay open the vanity and weakness of the pretence, that was alleged, for bringing about that Church Revolution, and to shew how ill it has been answered: that, in the main, it manifestly appears, the authors thereof had only made much havock and destruction without any repairs; resembling unskilful builders, and mere pretenders to the business, who are better at pulling down an old edifice, than at raising a new one. These, truths, I say, I set forth in the precedent Essay of the *Important Inquiry*.

NEVERTHELESS, some having been since of opinion, that there remains yet another grand article of indictment not therein taken notice of, it is judged advisable to add a discussion of it, as an Appendix to the disquisitions that have gone before. For howsoever immaterial

immaterial the point in question may appear to me, or is so in itself; yet, while the leaders, or the learned part of our adversaries take an occasion from it to traduce us; and the vulgar or unlearned, thro' their influence, conceive at us scandal; it may be incumbent on me, being engaged in the controversy, to disabuse these of their mistakes, and to refute the misrepresentations of the others.

THE stumbling-block and great stone of offence, I am going to speak of, relates to the SUPPER OF OUR LORD, in which we are charged with defrauding the laity of a part: But how ridiculously? when the Reformers themselves, by contesting the Real Presence of CHRIST's Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, take away the whole? Is not this truly *straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel*? Solicitous about the shell and throwing away the kernel; a mere Pharisaical virtue, to lay aside CHRIST's express ordinance and institution with respect to the essence of the Sacrament, where it is plain and evident; and to be rigorous for the ceremonial part, and the manner of dispensing it, which yet we think and hope to prove hereafter, to be left by CHRIST undetermined, and as a matter of indifference; and which they themselves must own to be dubious.

BUT it is too visible what were the springs and motives of this contest, *to wit*, the spirit of contradiction and contention. Luther could not refrain being so candid as to confess it, when, in his Treatise of the *Formula of the Mass* he was not ashamed to say, "If a Council ordained or permitted both species, we would in contempt of that Council receive but one of them, or we would neither take one nor the other, and curse those who receive either one or the other in virtue of that ordinance:" A plain insinuation, that nothing but the spirit of contradiction influenced this head patriarch of the Reformation to oppose the Church's present practice. For, on several other occasions,

sions, where laying passion aside, he uttered his real, unprejudiced sentiments on the subject, he declared Communion under *one* or *both* kinds to be quite a matter of indifference; as, when he subscribed to Melancthon's *Common Pleas*, in which his favourite disciple has treated this point problematically, and placed it among things he deems of no consequence. When, again, writing to a friend, he vents his resentment against Carolstadius for affecting, as he says, to "place the whole stress of the Reformation on these things of no thing." *Ep. ad Casp. To. 2. Ep. 58.* When, in fine, in the Year 1528. in his Visitation of Saxony, he expressly indulged them the liberty of receiving under *one* or *both* kinds, and continued in this mind to the year 1553, fifteen years after his commencing Reformer. And his Apologist Calixtus brings off his Patriarch's inconstancy and shameful varying on this head very lamely, in alleging for his excuse that, "having undertaken the Blessed Work (of the Reformation) rather thro' the violence of others (mark the motive) than by any voluntary act," that is, from the spirit of opposition, and not out of any attachment to truth, "He and his brethren could not in the beginning discover the necessity of the precept of Communion under both kinds, nor reject the contrary custom." Is not this frankly to own that the prime Gospellers, who are pretended to be instruments chosen by God for the Reformation of his Church and abolishment of error, wanted light and sagacity to discern the force of CHRIST's precept, which to him, Calixtus, appeared so evident? And yet even this man, this champion for Communion under *both* kinds, Calixtus himself, in the very treatise he had laboured in defence of his favourite opinion, towards the close thereof, No. 200, could not help being so indulgent with respect to the contrary practice, as to say, that "He does not exclude from the number of the true faithful our ancestors, who communicated under *one* kind above 500 years since, no more than those who commu-

“ nicate so at this time o’ day ;” which, by the way, is cutting the throat of his capital argument for Communion in *both* kinds ; while, by excusing the contrary practice, he must either fairly own, at last, that the precept is not clear, or say that CHRIST’s precepts are dispensable, which is nothing less than blasphemy. But whatsoever were the motives that actuated some of the principal Reformers to distinguish themselves in their opposition to the Catholic practice on this head, and however incoherently they have supported the contest ; yet since, as I said above, a great noise and stir has been made about this article, and our conduct herein is exaggerated into a scandal of the first magnitude, as a cheat imposed on the faithful, and a contradiction to CHRIST’s institution ; and many of the ignorant and unwary are infatuated by the clamours of their teachers, into a belief of it being so ; I presume to take upon me to clear up this point in the following sheets, and to vindicate ourselves from their slanders.

I must now be so ingenuous as to own, that in my management of this particular controversy, I am indebted for my principal materials to a Treatise of the learned Bishop of Meaux upon the same subject. Solomon told us long ago, *Nothing is new under the sun*, Eccles. i. 10. Nothing can be said, which has not been said before. — But tho’ I have built upon another’s foundation, I have wrought up the structure after my own plan ; I have ranged the arguments in a different order, and given them a new dress. Thus much may suffice to screen me from the imputation of plagiarism : Be this as it will ; solid truths can be no less truths, nor lose any of their weight, because often told, and placed in a just and clear light. But before we enter into a strict disquisition of our subject, it will be proper to settle two or three Preliminaries as an illustration to the question, and such as our adversaries themselves in several cases are obliged to admit in practice.

FIRST PRELIMINARY.

Nothing in the Sacraments is to be judged indispensable but what is essential; intrinsically so, or extrinsically, *i. e.* from it's own intrinsic nature, or from an outward precept.

THE truth of this assertion will be better cleared up, and my meaning explained, if exemplified in some matter; where all parties agree: the example, I apprehend the fittest for this purpose, is the Sacrament of *Baptism*. Baptism was originally administered by immersion or dipping; the word *baptize* imports a thorough washing or dipping: In this manner it resembles the Jewish purifications, and JESUS CHRIST, who came to fulfil the ceremonies of the old Law, intended not only to cleanse us from sin in the laver of Baptism, but also to express this effect of it, and the Regeneration of the new man, and this was done at first, as I said, by a total washing or immersion: in this manner, before Baptism was raised by CHRIST to the dignity of a Sacrament, St. John Baptist exercised his office upon all those who had recourse to him. Thus would CHRIST himself be baptized, the Evangelist informing us that he *ascended out of the water*, Matth. iii. 16. Of the numerous profelytes made by the Apostles to the Christian Faith, it is no where insinuated that they were baptized any other way. In the first ages of the Church, the acts of Councils and the rituals direct the administration of this Sacrament in this manner; and even the words used at present in the rituals, to express the action of the sponsors, saying that they are to "lift the child out of the "font," seem to allude to a previous immersion or plunging of it into the water. Yet, notwithstanding all these presumptions for this distinct ceremony, seem-

ingly exclusive of every other, and authorized by the example of our Blessed Lord himself, it has since been changed into that of sprinkling or pouring. The generality of the Reformers have come into the change, and pay no regard to the outcries of the Anabaptists, who are for keeping up to the original practice. And why have they allowed of this alteration? but because they look upon the acts of dipping and sprinkling, or pouring, to be a matter of indifference, and no way affecting the essence of the Sacrament, and that neither one nor the other has been prescribed by CHRIST, but left by him to the Church's determination. And in like manner, several things our Blessed Saviour did in the institution of the Holy Eucharist at his last Supper, are, as we shall see hereafter, by them as well as by us omitted, because looked upon no ways essential to that Divine Banquet.

THEREFORE, in this principle or preliminary the Reformers agree with us, that what is not essential to the Sacraments, nor prescribed by precept, may be dispensed with. But still there remains another disquisition to be made, *viz.* from whence the essence of a Sacrament is to be known; and which makes room for another postulate or preliminary, to which the Reformers are obliged also to subscribe.

SECOND PRELIMINARY.

The essence of a Sacrament is to be gathered from the Grace or Fruits expected to result from it.

IN order to illustrate this truth, and to place it in an uncontestable light, we will pursue the application of it to the Sacrament of Baptism. The grace of Baptism, as every child, instructed in the first rudiments of the Christian doctrine, can inform us, is the
cleansing

cleansing of our souls from Original Sin. Tho' therefore, in administering this Sacrament, dipping or immersion was, as we have seen, originally practised, yet it has since been laid aside, and changed into the action of sprinkling, or pouring: and why? Because 1st, The essence of the Sacrament as a sign and instrumental cause of the aforesaid grace, or of a spiritual regeneration, is not deemed to consist precisely in the quantity of the water (so there be sufficient to be judged a flux thereof) but in it's quality; nor in the manner of administering it, whether by dipping or sprinkling, but in the words of the institution, determining one action or the other to it's proper effect and meaning.

2dly, CHRIST is, therefore, judged not to have prescribed peremptorily one action or the other, *viz.* plunging or sprinkling, but to have left it undetermined, and as a thing wholly indifferent towards the grace and effect of the Sacrament. The Reformers must also close with us in this judgment, in order to screen themselves from the guilt of sacrilege in coming into the change. And nothing else, as we shall have occasion of shewing hereafter, can excuse them from the like guilt, in omitting several actions of CHRIST in their participation of his last Supper. But still, that this judgment may be cleared from the least imputation of being arbitrary; now comes the last and main disquisition of all; *viz.* from whence we are to be ascertained of the essence of the Sacrament, and the grace and effects resulting from it, being annexed to such signs or instruments; and how to know what was CHRIST's will and pleasure as to the manner of administering it? This leads us to a third Preliminary, in which we aver that

THIRD PRELIMINARY.

Where any law is not clear in itself, the practice of the Church and tradition are the only sure interpreters of such a law.

OUR pretended Reformers, who make a profession of relying wholly on the written word of God, and refuse to allow of the oracle of tradition or the unwritten word, do here, I own, affect to dissent from us, and to reject this principle in terms; but, as I shall presently make appear, they are obliged in sundry cases, to subscribe to it, and admit it in practice. And, indeed, this rule is so agreeable to common sense, that we find it generally to take place, even with respect to every human law; that is to say, practice and custom, or the settled opinion of mankind in regard such a practice, are to be reputed the best expositors of the force and meaning of such a law. So that, when the tenour of a law is obscure, the usual method is to go back and see how it was understood and explained from the beginning, and to look out for precedents to steer by. And therefore Almighty God, in subjecting his law to the like disquisitions, and to the same rule, accommodates himself to our narrow and limited comprehension, incapable of attaining to the perfect understanding of his law by any other way. And relatively to the Divine Law, this rule must hold much stronger, than with regard to human laws: Because Apostolic Tradition and Scripture, as we shall presently shew, are equally the Word of God, the one written, the other unwritten; the one the support of the other, *viz.* Scripture the basis of Tradition, Tradition the expositor of Scripture, and a supplement to it, where it is defective; and therefore the Apostle, in this last sense, directs his children in faith, the Thessalonians,

Ionians, to stand fast and hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word or epistle. Theff. ii. 14.

OTHER things delivered in Scripture are obscure, and want a farther explanation, as St. Peter expressly observes to be the case with respect to St. Paul's Epistles, *that there are many things in them hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures to their own perdition.* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

THEREFORE, how are these hidden truths to be unfolded, but by the same Divine Spirit that dictated them at first, inspiring and aiding his Holy Church to fathom their meaning? which cannot be canvassed by every capricious man, unstable in Judgment, varying in opinion, and wresting them, as St. Peter just told us, after the suggestions of his depraved heart, to his own ruin. The Church is, no doubt, the most proper judge in all religious doubts and controversies, and the natural interpreter of Scripture, meaning the written word of God, relatively to all doctrinal points and matters of faith; which made St. Austin say that, "He would not even believe the Gospels themselves, but as he was induced thereto by the Authority of the Church," *Ep. Tund. 4, 5. i. e.* by Apostolical tradition, receiving it's sanction from her authority; and effectually we should have been at a loss to know which is canonical Scripture, which not, but from these hands; much more to be assured of the true sense and meaning of it.

BUT however, waving this point in this extensive consideration, as foreign to the subject in hand, we aver it to be the only guide, we can rely on, relatively to the ceremonial part of the law, under which head the administration of the Sacraments is certainly to be reckoned. This truth is, even, to be evinced from the Old Testament, with regard to the Jewish law; of which, though every observance was minuted down, in the most distinct and exact manner, yet it was not
so

so particularised, but that there was room left for glosses, interpretations, exceptions and dispensations. An irrefragable instance of this we have in the law of the Sabbath, in relation whereto nothing could have been more circumstantiated than that was, when descending to the necessities of life, it was forbid under penalty of death, to dress meat on that day, or even to make a fire; and yet, notwithstanding that rigour of the law, it was determined in practice to be lawfull to untie a beast, to lead it to water, to draw it out of a ditch, and to do many corporal deeds of mercy; which our Blessed Lord, far from condemning, approved of in person, and by his own words and example.

THEIR known practice of praying for the dead, is also of the same nature; for, if the Book of Macchabees be not to be admitted into the canonical Scripture, as by the Reformers it is not, there was no other authority, but custom, to plead for and justify that practice; yet as I observed from Jeremy Taylor in another place, *Import. Enqui. Art. Purg.* p. 221. it was an established practice, which our Blessed Saviour never found fault with, though he reprov'd them for several Pharisaical inventions and innovations. But, what cannot fail, or at least, ought to carry the greatest weight with our adversaries, is, that the like dispensations and favourable explanations of the law, have been admitted into the New Testament, and by the Reformers themselves accepted. And first, this very law of the Sabbath, we but just instanced, must be owned to be as precise, and seemingly express and positive, as a law could be; and therefore, as such, only the Legislator that enacted the law, could absolutely reverse or alter it. Yet, this day for divine worship has been transferred to the Sunday, the Reformers have come into the change, tho' there be not a tittle of Scripture to authorize it. For, their alleging the Sunday to be sanctified by CHRIST'S Resurrection, is nothing to the purpose; because the instituting

tuting or consecrating a new day to the Divine Service cannot be looked on as an abrogation of an old one settled by precept. Therefore, we have nothing but the living oracle of tradition and Church authority to justify the alteration, which looked on the law of the Sabbath, as it was fixed to such a particular day, to be merely ceremonial, and to affect only the Jewish people, to whom the law was delivered.

THE prohibition of eating things strangled and blood, was another law of the antientest date; delivered to Noah and his children, *Gen.* ix. even long before any Mosaical observances; these latter were, nevertheless, abrogated by the Gospel, the other, on the contrary, confirmed by the Apostles themselves in the General Council of Jerusalem, *Acts* xv. 29. called on purpose about these ancient rites, to see which should be laid aside, which be retained? Their decree of continuing this in it's full force, was joined with two others, that were immutable and inviolable, *viz.* the forbidding fornication, and the partaking of idolatrous immolations, which, as they gave *this* an additional weight, so it does not appear upon record, that it was ever expressly reversed. Yet, notwithstanding these material circumstances in it's favour, it has since been abrogated by tradition and Church authority, the law looked upon as merely ceremonial, and to have been retained by the Apostles only for a time, in condescension to the weakness of the new converts from Judaism, tenacious of their ancient rites. The Church's reason for laying it aside, has never been contested by the Reformers, and the dispensation with it, by them universally received in practice.

THE instances we have hitherto produced, are only parities to our present case, shewing that a practical law is to be determined by general practice and tradition. But, what I apprehend to clench our argument beyond a reply, is, that the Sacraments themselves, in many material circumstances, agreed to by the Re-

formers, have been subjected to the same rule. For, to go no further than the Sacrament of Baptism, the example we have made choice of to argue from, thro' these preliminaries; how many things thereto, even essentially relating, have been decided by tradition and practice? 1st, The very minister of this Sacrament would be unknown, had not tradition declared who *should be*, and who occasionally *might be*; for tho' in the institution of this Sacrament, the power and charge of administering it was immediately delivered to the Apostles, who were Priests of the first rank or order, that is, Bishops, yet all allow Priests of the second order, and even Deacons, to be the legal ministers of it, and in their absence, rather than an infant should be deprived of these necessary means to salvation, tradition and practice has attributed, in cases of mortality, to every Christian the absolute power of administering it. 2dly, Whether Heretical Baptism be valid, was, at a time, problematically controverted in the Church, and determined at last from tradition alone, in the affirmative. 3dly, The manner of administering it, whether by immersion or sprinkling, as has been often mentioned, was decided by tradition to be a matter of indifference. 4thly, The necessity of Infant Baptism is another disputed point, and tho' to be deduced from Scripture, yet it cannot be cleared up from that Divine authority to such a degree of evidence, but that there are other texts from the same sacred source, which seemingly, disprove it; as where it is said, *Go teach and baptize*, Matth. xxviii. 19. and again, *He that shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved*, Mark xvi. 16. Directions which certainly can affect none, else but those that have attained to the age of maturity, such alone being susceptible of faith and instruction.

WHITHER, therefore, has it been necessary to appeal for the resolution of this important question, but to the only umpire fitted to determine it, the unwritten word

word of God, tradition and the practice of the Church? The Reformers themselves, whatsoever reluctance they may affect to shew of admitting the necessity of Infant Baptism, dare not, in practice, but condescend to the impatient expectations and irresistible demands for it of their people, in behalf of their dying children: And yet, if the question be asked how the opinion of the necessity of Infant Baptism should prevail while Infant Communion has been lain aside? No other answer can be given but that already alleged, that perpetual practice of the Church pleads for the necessity of the one, and disavows the necessity of the other; so that, tho' the Church has at times given the Holy Eucharist to infants, she for just reasons, has since made no difficulty to refuse it them. Yet, if the written Scriptures are only to be consulted, both one and the other have an equal foundation on these sacred records; since as it is said, *Unless you are born again of Water and the Holy Ghost, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven*, John iii. 5. so it is also said, *If you eat not the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink not his Blood, you shall not have life in you*, John vi. 54. Stopping therefore here, Infant Baptism is not more necessary than Infant Communion. And tho' it be said of Communion, *Let a Man prove himself, and so let him eat*, 1 Cor. xi. 28. so on the other hand it is also said, *He that shall believe and be baptized shall be saved*, Mark xvi. 16. An Anabaptist thinks this text to be of equal weight against Infant Baptism, with the other against their participation of the last Supper, *to wit*, that faith is as requisite a condition and indispensable in one case, as probation in the other; and what way have we to refute them, but by appealing to tradition and the constant practice of the Church for our guide?

LET then truth prevail, *prævaleat veritas*, and our judgments submit to what we are obliged to admit in practice, *viz.* that what is essential and what indifferent in the Sacraments, being left undetermined in the

written Scriptures, can only be supplied from tradition, and the perpetual usage of the Church. This is what we have evinced in these Preliminaries in regard to the Sacrament of Baptism; and an application of each of these principles to the point I have undertaken to maintain, *The lawfulness of Communion in One kind*, will also, I flatter myself, be it's full vindication from every censure and impeachment.





CHAP. I.

The Integrity of the Holy Eucharist saved under One Kind.

SECT. I.

The Integrity and Essence of the Holy Eucharist is perfectly saved to every intent and meaning of a Sacrament, both with regard to the thing signified by the sacramental symbols, and the grace accruing from it to the Receiver under each kind, and therefore he is not defrauded of any part of the Divine Blessing, by partaking of it in this manner.

***** WHEN the Reformers affect to raise an outcry against Catholic Communion under *one kind*, they must pretend to ground their indictment on one or both of these following reasons; namely, that either the Sacrament administered in this manner, is mutilated, and thereby the Receiver injured, and defrauded of a part of the Divine Blessing; or that CHRIST, having expressly directed it to be received under both kinds, his precept or ordinance is violated by the contrary practice. The first of these reasons we take upon us to consider, and hope, with God's help, to confute in this section.

A SACRAMENT is properly defined a *visible sign of invisible Grace*, and the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist answers fully this definition in two respects, *viz.*

1st,

1st, As a sign of CHRIST's Body and Blood, couched under the Sacramental symbols; and 2dly, as a sign of the spiritual nourishment of the soul accruing to the worthy Receiver. The one is the cause of the other, CHRIST's Body and Blood the source of all the grace we can expect or hope for from this Sacrament: And, therefore, if we make it appear that this source of grace, CHRIST himself, is wholly taken without division or diminution under each kind, then it must be granted that the Receiver is thus no way cheated of any share of these Divine gifts. But before I proceed to my proofs, I must beg leave to observe that, in canvassing this point, I consider it respectively to the Catholic Doctrine already fully settled in my former Essay, That there is a Real Presence of CHRIST's Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Our adversaries impugning it under any other notion, would be beating the air, and making a noise about nothing. And, how the matter would stand in the hypothesis of their figurative system, is equally foreign to my purpose to inquire into.

A Real Presence therefore being supposed, and which, as I just said, must be supposed, if our adversaries would make us a party in this debate, the Body and Blood of CHRIST, and even his Soul and Divinity, are essentially and inseparably together under each kind by a *concomitancy*, as Divines term it; a hard word, our antagonists are pleased to think it, but yet expressive and significant, importing an indivisible union of one with the other, grounded on Scripture and Reason.

FIRST, St. Paul says, that CHRIST *being risen, dies no more*, Rom. vi. 9. therefore, his body, wherever it be, is his living Body, not a dead carcase, a Body animated by a Soul, and consisting of Blood, and all the other appurtenances of a living body. Agreeable to this principle, when the Apostle says, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the*
Blood

Blood of CHRIST, 1 Cor. x. 16. (a text which our adversaries impertinently magnify into an argument against us in this controversy) so he adds, *And the Bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of our Lord?* *ibid.* that is, the living Body, and therefore where the Body is, there is the Blood; and where the Blood there the Body. The Apostle in another place, charges the unworthy Receiver under either kind with being guilty of the profanation both of CHRIST's Body and Blood, *He, says he, that eateth this Bread or drinketh this Cup unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of our Lord*, 1 Cor. xi. 27. Our adversaries, indeed, in order to evade the force of this text, which they could not but be aware of, have, in spite of public faith, industriously corrupted it, by an alteration of the disjunctive particle *or*, in the first member of the proposition, into the conjunctive *and*, making the Apostle say, *He that eats and drinks*; but if the genuine text be to stand, and truth to prevail, it follows as a necessary deduction that, whosoever shall eat either kind worthily, will partake both of CHRIST's Body and Blood, and of the grace resulting from it. It also becomes a tacit insinuation that even then, in the Apostles time, the faithful did, on occasions, partake of the Divine Banquet under either species alone.

SOME, however, endeavour to justify the visible prevarication, in the alteration of the disjunctive particle in the text cited, by pretending that the disjunctive *or*, and conjunctive *and* are here and there used indifferently one for the other. But, be it so; their presumption, however, that the Apostle set one particle for the other on this occasion is wholly arbitrary, and consequently the liberty they have taken of putting that into his mouth, which he did not say, unjustifiable: It is more reasonable to conclude that, whereas he was instructing his disciples in what manner they ought to prepare themselves for this Divine Banquet, he gave them to understand, that an unworthy communicant

communicant under one kind alone would be equally guilty of a profanation of CHRIST's Body and Blood, as if he received in both species. And this assertion of the Apostle, being only the direct consequence of the Catholic doctrine of Concomitance, becomes reciprocally a proof of it; viz. that the Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity, and whole CHRIST himself, the whole source of Grace is perfectly contained under each species; that under each is offered an indignity to the whole, being unworthily received; under each the grace of the whole is partaken of, being received worthily. The truth, then, of the mystery of the Real Presence, and of the doctrine of Concomitance, which is a consequence of it, being supposed, I presume to aver that, when CHRIST, at his last Supper, said to his Apostles, *Take, eat, this is my Body*, he could not mean to give them mere human flesh, or the flesh of man alone, but the *flesh of God man*; and when he said, *This is my Blood*, he could mean no other than the Blood that was the price of our redemption, receiving it's value from his divinity united to the human nature. Much less could he have meant to give them his flesh, according to the Capharnaïtes gross way of conceiving it, as the flesh of an animal, cut off from the shambles, or a dead carcass without the Blood, or inanimate Blood without the Body: For, by such a separation, he must really and truly have died again, and must die as often as this mystery is repeated, in direct contradiction to what we have just heard St. Paul tell us, that CHRIST *being risen dies no more*, and in direct contradiction to the essential qualities of a glorified Body, Immortality and Incorruption.

THE doctrine of Concomitance, as we have here explained it, is so agreeable to reason, and is so direct a sequel of the Real Presence, that it is a subject of surprize, how some of our adversaries, who connive at the belief of the latter, as the Sacramentarians did with respect to some of the Lutherans, can be so squeamish as to demur to the other. Jurieux,
a Calvinist

a Calvinist minister, tho' a professed antagonist in this controverted point, is more candid, and talks more consequently, when he owns, if the doctrine of Transubstantiation and of the Real Presence be true, that it is also true, the "species of Bread would contain the Flesh and Blood of JESUS CHRIST." *Jur. Exam.* p. 480. But from this frank concession out of the mouth of an enemy, another important consequence directly ensues, *viz.* that as the doctrine of Concomitance is confessed to be but a sequel of the Real Presence, so, at whatsoever time a Communion in *one* kind, which is grounded upon the said doctrine, has been allowed, it becomes a reciprocal proof of the article of the Real Presence and Transubstantiation having also been the general belief of the same age; and, whereas we shall hereafter shew that the practice of the *first* is of the ancientest standing, the belief of the *second*, from whence it follows, must be admitted to be of equal date. But, then, how does this Protestant Minister go about to elude the force of these strong and undeniable consequences from his own concessions? He first, roundly denies the antiquity of the practice of Communion under *one* kind, in contradiction to attested facts, from the earliest times, in proof of it, which I shall produce in their proper place? c. 2. Whereas if he would have argued *ad hominem*, that is to say, if he would have attacked us directly from our own principles (as he should have done, or has done nothing) it had been his business to shew that, notwithstanding these concessions, the lawfulness of Communion under *one* kind, which we think to result from them, was still reprobable.

WHAT I say to this Minister, I say to every one else, who pretends to quarrel with us upon this article: for, as I premised above, they must either take in the whole system of our belief, or they don't contend with us, but with an enemy in the air.

I MUST own that the Minister aforecited, does make a shew of attacking us on our own premises, when he says that in the previous hypothesis “we undoubtedly receive the whole Sacrament of CHRIST’s Body and Blood under each kind, but that we don’t receive them Sacramentally.” *Jur. Exam. tract. 6. sect. 6. p. 480. 487.* But whether this distinction has not more of subtilty in it than meaning, I submit to the judicious Reader: for, to mean any thing, it must imply that more is received in substance and effect, in *both* kinds, than under *one*, or it implies nothing. But, on the contrary, under *one* kind, as has been proved, is received the whole substance of the Sacrament, *viz.* CHRIST’s Body and Blood; under either, again, we receive the whole source of Grace, CHRIST himself: more than this can’t be hoped for, or even imagined, unless our adversaries would allot more virtue to the sacramental signs, or external species, than to the thing signified, CHRIST himself couched under these veils, which would be talking blasphemy, as well as nonsense, a language, also, directly contradicting CHRIST’s own words, who says, *He that eateth of this bread shall have eternal life: — He that eats me shall live for me and by me, as I myself live for my Father and by my Father,* John vi. 57, 58.

IF, then, they would mean to say that Communion under *one* kind, howsoever comprehensive in itself, does not yet sufficiently declare CHRIST’s Death and Passion, as by him commanded, or at least, that it does not give us such a lively image of that mystery of our Redemption, as is expressed by a Communion under *both* kinds; I answer, that I apprehend this effect not to appertain strictly to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, purely as such, in which acceptation it is properly only a visible sign of invisible Grace, or of the spiritual nourishment of our souls: but as a sacrifice, which we have retained, and they have discarded, this image is shewn in the perfectest manner, by the mystical separation

separation of the Body and Blood under the different species in the Mass, which we shall have occasion to speak of in the next Section. If they would still reply that even as a Sacrament, the Celestial Banquet, or the Lord's Supper, and our spiritual nourishment is not so fully and significantly represented under *one* as under both kinds; be it so, and what then? our spiritual purification and the new generation of the whole man in Baptism is not so perfectly expressed, as has been observed in the Preliminaries, by sprinkling as by dipping; notwithstanding which, the latter practice, tho' the original, has given way to the former, and the change has been adopted by the Reformers themselves, and why? Because the Grace of the Sacrament is judged to be annexed to the substance and quality of the water (with the words of the institution) and not precisely to the quantity nor to the manner of giving it. So, tho' the nature of a feast, and our perfect nourishment be more lively figured by the separate actions of eating and drinking, yet while the thing itself given by *one*, is the same that is signified by both, the sign or action, directly expressing only *one*, must be judged to signify implicitly and sufficiently *both*; and the grace received from *one*, to be equal to the grace received from *both*, because we receive in it CHRIST whole and entire, who is the whole source of Grace.

THE *manna*, miraculously showered down from Heaven for the corporal nourishment of the Israelites in the desert, is interpreted unanimously by the Fathers, and declared by CHRIST himself, *John* vi. 49, 50, 51. to have been an emblem or figure of the Holy Eucharist, and yet of *that* we learn from Exodus, *Exod.* xvi. 17, 18. that he who gathered more had no more, and he that gathered less had no less.

BUT while the Essence and Integrity of the Holy Eucharist is perfectly saved under *either* kind, in the Catholic Communion, taking in the whole system of our belief in this point, we have a right to demand of them in our turn, to shew how the same is fully saved

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in their figurative system, with respect to those, who having an aversion to wine, are allowed among them to communicate under the single element of Bread? Such was the liberty granted by decree in their French Synod of Poitiers, An. 1560. c. 12. art. 7. *of the Lord's Supper.* For these either receive the *whole* Sacrament, or they do not. If they do receive the *whole*, where are the grounds of their outcry against the Catholic practice? If they do not receive the *whole*, the Sacrament in this case is mutilated, and they become guilty of a sacrilege; and they have no Real Presence, no Concomitance to screen them from the imputation. If they have recourse to Mr. Jurieux's refuge of saying, that they, indeed, receive the Sacrament, but not Sacramentally, or that they receive the Substance of the Sacrament, but not the Sacrament. This, as I have just shewn, is a mere jingling of words without a meaning; for, in short, if they do not receive the Sacrament as such, they don't receive a thing of CHRIST's institution, but a mere human invention, which throws them still under the imputation of sacrilege and imposture.

If, in fine, they would pretend that such receive by faith under *one* kind, what the others do under *both*, they by this reply, only elude the difficulty, but do not solve it. For in case of an incapacity to receive in either kind, whether by inability of body, or by being removed from the opportunity and means of partaking of this ineffable blessing, such an one still may receive it by faith, in affection, or desire; but if he who receives in *one* kind only, has no more, he receives no Sacrament really. The difficulty, I say, presses unanswerably on the Reformers, because they are destitute of the arguments which plead for Communion in *one* kind in the Catholic system, and therefore, till they can get over it themselves, they ought at least, to be so modest and reserved as not to presume to charge it upon us. In the mean while, I am
ready

ready to own that, tho' the Integrity and Essence of the Holy Eucharist be perfectly saved under *one* kind, in the Catholic Belief, yet if it can still be made to appear that CHRIST himself has left any express directions or ordinance as to the manner of receiving it, or in a word, that he has appointed it to be received in *both* kinds, the precept would no doubt, be indispensable, and our breaking through it sacrilegious; and therefore to shew that this is not the case, is the subject of the subsequent Section.

SECTION II.

It does not appear from the institution of the Holy Eucharist, or from any part of the New Testament, that Christ has prescribed the manner of receiving it as a Sacrament, whether in one or in both kinds.

AS our adversaries, in the present debate, have taken upon them to sustain the affirmative, the proof lies wholly upon them, and we have consequently, no other task on our hands than to shew the fallacy of their arguments; and their insufficiency towards settling the point in question. In order thereto, I apprehend it requisite to premise two or three Notes, part of which must be granted by our adversaries; and those they may not be inclined to admit, we hope to make good, as we go along, in the discussion of this subject.

Not. 1. It must be allowed on all hands, that of the many things our Blessed Saviour said and did, at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, as well as at other times, some were addressed to the Apostles personally, several directed to them as Priests, and through them to their successors in the same capacity, and neither one nor the other of these, to the whole body of his Church.

Not. 2. WHERE our Blessed Saviour enjoins, or his faithful interpreter, St. Paul, inculcates to the Church

in

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in general, the use of this august Sacrament, under the denominations of eating or drinking, we apprehend it to appear evident from comparing the several texts together, that it is not these distinct actions, or the manner of partaking of the Sacrament, that is prescribed, but only it's substance and reality, or, in a word, that by eating and drinking is meant no more than receiving CHRIST's Body and Blood.

Not. 3. In the institution of the adorable mystery of the Holy Eucharist, the Catholic Church rightly judges there are two things to be duly considered and properly distinguished, *to wit*, that it is not only a Sacrament, but also a Sacrifice ; the former concerning the whole body of the Church, the latter appertaining to her Ministers alone of the first and second order, *viz.* Bishops and Priests.

If the candid Reader will please to take these premises along with him, when he canvasses the arguments of our opponents, I flatter myself that he will find the latter to fall very short of coming up to the proof, they affect to ascribe to them. Bishop Montague, a Protestant Prelate, is positive that they have no proofs from the Inspired Writings for their fond opinion, "Where does the Scripture," says he, "command, that the people should receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in both kinds? — The Scripture teaches no such thing, the Scripture does not command it." T. 1. orig. p. 396. So this Protestant Prelate. However I'll let his brethren speak for themselves, submitting their pretended proofs to every impartial and unprejudiced judgment.

THE argument on which they lay the greatest stress, in support of their opinion of Communion under *both* kinds being a matter of precept, is drawn from the act and words of the institution itself, where CHRIST at the last Supper, after he had distributed to his Apostles the consecrated Bread, took the Cup, blessed it and delivered it to them, saying, *Drink ye all of this*, Matt.

xxvi. 27. which being a plain command to the Apostles to partake of the Cup, as well as of the Bread, they conclude it to be a rule for all after-communicants; and we presume to think their conclusion much too precipitate, and that nothing less is imported by the injunction.

ALLOWING the Evangelists to be all of them equally divinely inspired, let one declare the meaning of the other, St. Mark, I say, be permitted to expound St. Matthew; appealing, then, to him, he will inform us who the *All* were, enjoined to share of the Cup, *to wit*, the Apostles then present at table, and *they All*, says he, *drank of it*, Mark xiv. 23. the same that, just before received from their Divine Master's hands the consecrated bread, tho' without the formal injunction, with which he delivered to them the Cup, of bidding them partake *all* of it, being a caution intirely unnecessary; because, blessing the bread and breaking it, he gave to each their respective portion; but, in giving them the Cup, he further admonished them to divide it among them, that the last of the company might not be debarred his share. In fine, taking in the whole circumstances of this injunction it does not at least appear that it could be directed to any others than to the Apostles, or to their successors in the same capacity, to whom CHRIST said presently after *Do this in remembrance of me*; to them to whom he gave the power to do what he did, *viz.* to consecrate and distribute the Eucharist as well as to receive it.

THESE eclclaircissements make good the observations of our first *Note*, that many things were addressed to the Apostles personally, many in their priestly capacity; and several other circumstances accompanying this act of our Blessed Lord at the last Supper, besides what we have just mentioned, confirm the alleged injunction to have been spoken to them in *one* or *both* of these manners. For, they were the privileged persons, selected from the rest of his disciples, to become witnesses

nesses of the many mysteries that preceded his sacred Passion. They were distinguished with the honour of having their Feet washed by their Divine Master. They alone were admitted to eat with him the Lamb of the Passover, to see this figure consummated in a change thereof into the pasche of the immaculate Lamb of his blessed Body and Blood, then immolated by himself in an unbloody manner, under the forms of Bread and Wine, in commemoration of the bloody immolation, which was to be made the next day for the sins of the world. They, in fine, were on this occasion made Priests of the new law, and vested with the power to do what he did, as I observed above ; that is, to perpetuate the sacrifice of his Body and Blood, and through them derived to their successors, all Priests, for a continual memorial and image of his death and passion ; saying to them, *Do this in remembrance of me.*

OUR adversaries will, perhaps, still reply, that tho' several speeches were addressed by our blessed Lord to the Apostles in their personal or in their priestly capacity, yet others were delivered to them as the representatives of the whole body of the faithful, and that they look on the two precepts, *Drink ye all of this*, and the other, *Do this*, &c. to have this different relation, viz. the former to belong to all the faithful, the latter to themselves and their successors. But admitting the assertion in general, I beg leave to ask from whence the different direction of CHRIST's speeches and precepts is to be gathered and determined ? for, he himself has not qualified them, they being mostly addressed to the same persons and in the same manner ; the evangelists have not unfolded the mystery ; therefore it is to tradition at last, we must be obliged to appeal, and to accept of for our guide ; and with respect to the two precepts in dispute, tradition has declared them both to affect the Apostles in their personal and priestly characters ; the close connection of one with the other, joined to the above-recited circumstances, shew their relation

relation to be *one* and the *same*; and therefore the Reformers contrary comment upon them, must be judged wholly arbitrary and without foundation.

FERTILE however of quibbles, and chusing rather to play a low game than stand out, our adversaries pretend even in the precept *Do this*, &c. to discover a proof of their favourite opinion: for by the said precept, say they, the Apostles were enjoined to do *all* that CHRIST did, and therefore, as he gave them his Body and Blood, then, under *both* species, it was to become to them and their successors, a rule to steer by, in the dispensing of the sacred mysteries ever after.

THE answer to this argument I have given already, viz. that CHRIST certainly enjoined the Apostles and their successors to do what he did, viz. as often as they celebrated the awful mysteries to consecrate and to receive it themselves under *both* kinds, as a perpetual image and memorial of his Death and Passion; and this precept, as we shall presently shew, the Church daily fulfils by her Ministers in the unbloody sacrifice of the holy Mass. But to make *all* that CHRIST did at this solemn time become a law either to the Laity of the Church or even to it's Ministers, is too extensive, and has been contradicted, in practice, by the Reformers themselves in the following several particulars. 1st, The humble ceremony of washing feet, tho' done by CHRIST as an example to the Apostles, with an injunction to do the same, *I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also*, John xiii. 15. is by the Reformers neglected. 2dly, CHRIST instituted the Blessed Eucharist in the evening, he was about to be betrayed, as a livelier image of his future passion, being the last act of his life, and yet they don't look on themselves tied down by precept to a time so full of mystery. 3dly, By the practice and law of the Church we take the Sacrament fasting, unless at the extremity of death, tho' CHRIST gave it to his Apostles at supper. How many things are here,

CHRIST did, which the Reformers don't scruple to lay aside? And again, adhering to the letter of CHRIST's words, if *Drink ye all of this*, be judged to be directed to the whole Church, in the Apostles as it's representatives, since as such, they must be deemed mere communicants, our adversaries will have a difficulty to convince an Anabaptist that the other precept *Do this*, &c. has not also the same extensive tendency and direction, and consequently, as they, the Anabaptists, celebrate this mystery, that every private Christian has not the power of consecrating and administering the Sacrament in his own family, independently of a proper Minister; which made, even, Tertullian observe many ages ago that, sticking to the letter of the institution, exclusive of tradition, the proper Minister of this august Sacrament would be unknown to us, *Tertul. de Coron. Mil. c. 3.* On the other hand, if, *Do this*, &c. with respect to the administering the Sacrament was a precept limited to the Apostles in their Priestly capacity, Deacons must be thereby precluded, contrary to the known practice of the Church, the power of dispensing the sacred mysteries: Private Communion, or the custom of carrying the Sacrament home, as we shall shew hereafter, ch. 2. sect. 3. to have been the primitive practice, must, by virtue of the same precept, have been forbid. Scripture, I say, alone, or the bare words of the institution of this Sacrament, are insufficient towards clearing up all these uncertainties: so that, in short, appealing to the written words, we should be at a loss to know how, and who is to consecrate, how to give, how to receive the Sacrament; and the whole mystery of the Eucharist, as well as of Baptism, would lie under a cloud, without the help of tradition to dispel it.

THESE observations justify the decree of the Council of Constance for Communion under *one* kind, enacted, not with a *non obstante*, or in contradiction to CHRIST's Divine Precept of Communion under *both* kinds, as

our adversaries falsely and maliciously traduce it, but on the presumption that this act of CHRIST at his last Supper, and his words addressed to the Apostles, *Drink ye all of this*, did not become a precept to the Universal Church, no more than his other actions on the same occasion, just recited, which the Reformers themselves make no difficulty of superseding in their own practice: In a word, the true tenour and purport of the Council's Decree is this: tho' CHRIST instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under *both* kinds, and in that manner gave it to his Apostles; yet it not appearing to Her that this act of our Blessed Lord implied a command to the faithful of all states and conditions, and at all times, of receiving it so; she for her just reasons, hereafter mentioned, has directed the Laity to receive it only in *one* kind: in the same manner as, notwithstanding CHRIST instituted it at Supper, she has for the like solid reasons ordained it to be taken fasting: and the Reformers themselves come into the latter practice. Thus much I think to be a sufficient vindication of the Council, and a satisfactory answer to the Reformers capital and fundamental argument for Communion under *both* kinds, from the mistaken precept of CHRIST, so often recited, and I hope fully refuted.

OUR adversaries next refuge in support of their opinion, is to the sixth chapter of St. John, where CHRIST says, addressing himself to all the faithful, *Unless you eat of the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, you shall have no life in you*, John vi. 54. From whence they conclude it evident, that Sacramental or Life-giving grace is insured to us upon no other terms, than by an exact conforming to the institution, by eating and drinking. But first, this text taken literally, would not only prove what our adversaries would have it, that the Grace and Integrity of the Sacrament is absolutely annexed to both species, but it would prove more than they want, *viz.* that Communion, or the participation of CHRIST's Body

and Blood, is an indispensable condition of Salvation to all mankind, infants not excepted; for if CHRIST's words will admit of no restriction, infants are not to be debarred these necessary means of salvation. If an explanation be allowed in one respect, why not in the other? And we plead the privilege.

BUT secondly, this argument comes very ill out of the mouths of our adversaries, I mean the generality of Protestants, who don't allow, what is said in the sixth chapter of St. John to be spoken concerning the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. However, if it be made use of as an *argumentum ad hominem*, that is, as coming at least, home to us, who understand this chapter in that acceptation, we admit the appeal, and we refer our disputants to the Council of Trent for our answer. This august assembly has, therefore, justly observed that, as our Blessed Lord said, John vi. 54. *Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you*, has also said, in the same chapter, ver. 52. *If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever*. And he who said, ver. 55. *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, has life everlasting*, has also said, ver. 52. *And the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world*. And ver. 59. *He that eateth this bread shall live for ever*. And lastly, he, who said, ver. 57. *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him*; has also said, ver. 58. *He that eateth me, the same shall also live by me*. Now, in the texts we have here confronted together, it is plain that, the same virtue and efficacy are by CHRIST ascribed to the single species, or to the action of eating alone, at one time, which at the other are allotted to the two species, or to the actions of eating and drinking jointly: from whence the Council justly concludes, what we premised in the second Note, that by these several actions of eating and drinking, whether joint or separate, is meant no more than receiving CHRIST's Body and Blood, which is perfectly fulfilled

fulfilled by partaking of the substance of the Sacrament in either kind, as must be obvious to every one, who will but take along with him the doctrine of concomitancy aforesettled, *Sett. i.* whereby is made evident that no more is received in *both* species nor by both actions than by one, and as much received in *one* species as in *both*, viz. the whole source of Grace, CHRIST himself whole and entire, without division or diminution, his living Body and Bood. So that as often as CHRIST enjoins the participation of the Sacrament, as such, that is, as merely a means of grace, whether by the denomination of eating alone, or eating and drinking jointly, 'tis manifestly, only the substance of the thing, and not the manner of taking it, that is commanded.

It was from a full conviction of this truth, St. Cyprian many ages ago, in his treatise *de Lapsis*, speaking of Infant Communion, said, that parents leading their Children to the sacrifices of idols, deprived them of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, in rendering them thereby unworthy to partake of that Divine Nourishment; which, however, would not have been true, as he frequently declares the custom of administering to children in the species of wine alone, unless he had believed the Body and Blood to be both contained under the *one* species. In another place to the same effect, alluding to Infant Communion, he says that the command of CHRIST, to eat his Flesh and drink his Blood, is thoroughly fulfilled, and life everlasting annexed to it, undoubtedly insured to Infants, who partake of it under the species of wine. St. Austin afterwards makes mention of this passage of St. Cyprian, without censuring the custom of communicating children under the single species of wine, or finding fault with the father's doctrine; a tacit insinuation of the practice being general, and of the doctrine being conformable to his own sentiments, and judged by him to be irreprovable and orthodox.

To all this it may yet be replied that, to admit of the foregoing premises will be attended with consequences that are shocking and unwarrantable; that is to say, supposing the whole essence and virtue of the Eucharist to be contained under each single species: supposing that CHRIST has left no precise directions to his Church, how it is to be received by the laity, it would follow as a direct consequence from these concessions that the institution of the Sacrament under *both* kinds was vain and needless, and the intent of it void of signification and mystery; a consequence blasphemous to think of and injurious to the increased wisdom and goodness of CHRIST.

BUT, as formidable as this objection may appear, it is confuted at once by this single distinction, settled in the third note of this chapter, of a *Sacrament* and a *Sacrifice*. The Holy Eucharist barely as a *Sacrament* is strictly speaking, only a visible sign of invisible Grace, or of the spiritual nourishment of our soul; as such is commanded by CHRIST in the several texts aforecited, to be received by the whole body of the faithful, *Except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you, &c. &c.* and as such is received, so often as they take it under either species; because, as has been often said, under each is contained the whole source of grace, CHRIST himself, Body, Soul, Divinity, his living Flesh and Blood. As a *sacrifice* it is, among other respects, principally considered to be a special memorial of CHRIST's Death and Passion, and therefore enjoined the Apostles, in their priestly capacity, and all their successors as often as they celebrate the awful mysteries, to do it in commemoration of, and thanksgiving for that ineffable act of mercy, exhibited in our behalf; *As often as you shall eat this Bread and drink the Chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord until he come.* 1 Cor. xi. 26. CHRIST therefore, in this view instituted it in *both* kinds, to the end that, though one and the other were by concomitance and essentially the same thing, and one alone sufficient as a Sacrament,

yet

yet this mystical separation of the species in the Mass, might be a livelier image of the real separation of his Body and Blood on Mount Calvary; and therefore it is observed by some, that St. Paul, citing the words of the institution, when he speaks of the taking of the Bread he says, *This do for commemoration of me*; but coming to the chalice, he says, *This do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me*, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. insinuating that one may be taken when the other is not (as a Sacrament) but still when both are taken, as it is in the celebration of the sacrifice, that it becomes a commemoration of him in a more special manner: it becomes also a perpetual oblation to the Divine Justice for our sins, a continual immolation of the immaculate Lamb of God in an unbloody manner, once immolated by a real effusion of his Blood on the Cross, and *one* the application of the *other* towards cancelling the guilt, and paying the whole debt of our enormous iniquities. It becomes, in fine, a means of uniting us with our High Priest and Victim, CHRIST JESUS, by offering it up to the Eternal Father for all the ends and intentions of a sacrifice.

FROM these considerations, then, it is plain that the Holy Eucharist was not instituted by CHRIST in vain, under the two species, that the design of our Blessed Lord herein was most loving and merciful, full of mystery, and of infinite benefit to us. And the Priests of the Catholic Church, to whom it belongs, as I said above, to celebrate the awful mysteries, pay a dutiful regard to our Blessed Lord's command, and to the whole design of the Divine Institution, by exhibiting the mystical separation of CHRIST's Body and Blood under both species, in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

IN the mean while, that our Reformers should appear so affectedly scrupulous about one part of the Divine institution, and reject the other, *viz.* that they should pretend to be so solicitous about the Integrity of the Sacrament, or rather about the formality of it, and at the same time leave themselves wholly destitute

of a sacrifice, is as just a matter of astonishment, as it is an inconsistency of behaviour that can no way be accounted for; and they have not only the plain injunction of CHRIST to his Apostles, as Priests standing in full front against them (if any thing certain, independently of tradition can be gathered from it) they have not only practice immemorial of the Church, and perpetual tradition to reproach them, for laying aside this part of the Divine Institution, but they have also the Law of Moses, and the original Law of Nature to condemn them.

SACRIFICES to the great Creator of all things, 'tis well known, came into the world with the Creation; it was the homage he himself required to be made to him, as the Author of our being. Abel in the beginning of time offered to God a pure oblation, and it was graciously looked upon; Cain was reserved and unsincere in his offering, and it was rejected. Noah no sooner stepped out of the Ark, but by God's express command, he immolated to him a Holocaust of thanksgiving for the preservation of himself and family, and in them of the whole seed of man, to a succession of generations. Abraham, Job, Melchisedech, and all the Patriarchs of the Law of Nature, paid their homage to the Deity in repeated Sacrifices. The most awful and substantial part of the Law of Moses was composed of variety of sacrifices, and those of God's own appointment. And as every thing that passed in the old Law was, as the Apostle tells us, only in figure, the truth whereof was to be fulfilled in the Law of Grace, so it's sacrifices must be judged to have the same relation.

It will perhaps be replied that they did receive their perfection and consummation, in the sacrifice CHRIST offered of himself on Mount Calvary, which made the Apostle also say that therefore, *He needeth not daily;* (as the other Priests of the Mosaic Law) *offer sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people, for this he did*

did once in offering himself, Heb. vii. 27. And no doubt the ancient sacrifices were by this one sacrifice of CHRIST entirely abolished, which St. Paul in the tenth chapter of the same Epistle, paraphrasing the 39th Psalm, plainly declares: nor does the Catholic Church presume to substitute any other new sacrifice since, but only concludes from the proofs, we shall give a short sketch of immediately, that CHRIST has graciously vouchsafed to continue the same sacrifice for ever with us, tho' in a different manner.

HE then offered himself a bloody Victim for our sins, and made a compensative and superabundant satisfaction for them: He is now offered by the hands of the Priests in the adorable sacrifice of the Mass, in an unbloody manner, as a memorial, thanksgiving, and an application to us of the fruits of his first mercy, CHRIST himself being in both circumstances the High Priest and Victim. His Body, Blood, and Soul were then *really* separated, now *mystically*. And, therefore, tho' CHRIST, offering himself on the Cross, did then, as the Apostle says, *perfect for ever, them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 14. yet as without prejudice to, or diminution of the ineffable mercy he exhibited to us then, he does not cease to interpose with his Eternal Father in our behalf even now, *ever living*, as the Apostle adds in the same chapter, *to intercede for us*, Heb. vii. 23. So the revival *now* on our altars of the sacrifice he had made before on Mount Calvary, does not anyways derogate from *that*, or offer any indignity thereto, but on the contrary derives from it it's own value, and enhances our benefit resulting from CHRIST's merits and sufferings, the fruits whereof are here in a special manner appropriated to us: When the Apostle tells us, Heb. xii. 10. that in the Law of Grace *we have an altar, of which they have no right to eat, who serve the tabernacle*, he cannot be otherwise understood than with regard to the sacrifice of the Mass that is daily offered upon this altar. And when, 1 Cor. x. from ver. 14

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to 21. he draws a parallel between the partakers of the Christian Sacrifice, and those that partake of the Jewish or Heathen Sacrifice, he must either suppose such a sacrifice subsisting in the new Law, or what he says is void of meaning. For tho', ver. 21. he calls both the Christian and Heathenish sacrifice by the name of *Table*, yet as in the latter member of the parallel he must mean the altar, or the sacrifice offered upon it, so in the former part it must carry the same signification, or the sense is lame and imperfect.

IN the 13th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles the Divine Sacrifice is also clearly insinuated, it being said that, *As they were sacrificing to the Lord — the Holy Ghost said, Separate to me Barnabas and Saul, &c.* The Greek word for *sacrificing*, in this place in the Greek original is *λειτεργέντων*, which to this day the Greeks constantly make use of as often as they speak of the sacrifice of the Mass, tho' it be by the Protestant Translators rendered here *ministring to the Lord*, to ward off the strength of it's evidence against them; as they promiscuously render *altar* by the word *table* for the same purpose; but to canvass their many corruptions on this head would carry me out of the design of this digression. — Therefore to proceed; the few hints I have just given from the New Testament clearly evince the existence of a sacrifice in the Law of Grace. The institution of sacrifices from the beginning of Time, and Almighty God's chusing to be honoured by this manner of homage, when they were only in figure, plead not only for their accomplishment which was done on Mount Calvary, but that this superlative tribute to our great Creator by sacrifice, should not in his more perfect Law of Grace be abrogated, but rather changed into another purer in the Divine Sight, and more acceptable. And to argue from reason and the dictates of common sense, while our Blessed Lord is confessed by the major and more rational part of the Reformation to have instituted the sacred order of
Priesthood

Priesthood in this his new Law, we can't imagine that he would leave it destitute of a sacrifice; an unsacrificing Priest was ever unheard of. No, the Prophets long before predicted it's existence and magnificence, and in it the reprobation of all preceding sacrifices. — For brevity's sake I appeal to the single testimony of Malachy who plainly foretells God's rejecting the Jewish sacrifices, and substituting a new and purer sacrifice in their stead, which was to be offered to him in every place among the Gentiles; *From east to west*, says he, *my Name is great among the Gentiles; in every place there is sacrificing and a pure oblation offered to my Name.* Mal. i. 11. The Prophet here plainly points out a lasting sacrifice, viz. not made at one time, as was CHRIST's bloody sacrifice of himself on the Cross, nor in one place, as were the Jewish sacrifices appointed by God's express command to be offered in the Temple, and no where else; but in every country and by every people. The primitive Fathers unanimously agree in this meaning of the prophecy, and urge it as a proof of the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

EXCLUSIVE of this sacrifice of the new Law, it is still more unintelligible, how CHRIST is termed in Scripture *a Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec*, for certainly, not on account of the bloody sacrifice he offered of himself on Mount Calvary, because this had no analogy or resemblance with the figure; but by reason therefore of the unbloody and perpetual oblation he makes of himself High Priest and Victim, first in his own Person at the last Supper, since by the hands of his substitutes the Priests of the Church every day at the altar, under the Eucharistical symbols of Bread and Wine, presignified by Melchisedech sacrificing in those elements.

ST. CYPRIAN, *Ep. 6. ad Cecilianum*, St. Jerom, *Ep. ad Marcel. et alibi*, expressly draw this conclusion, and largely and learnedly descant upon it.

BUT it is quite foreign to the controversy I am engaged in concerning Lay Communion to dwell any longer on the numberless and irrefragable authorities, that are to be produced in support of this august sacrifice of the Altar: So far as I have touched upon it, I apprehend it has not been impertinent to my subject, in shewing that the Holy Eucharist in one meaning or acceptation, is undoubtedly a sacrifice, that, as such, it was not instituted in *both* kinds without design and mystery, and that this mystery is fully accomplished, and CHRIST's command to his Apostles, *Do this in remembrance of me*, literally obeyed, not only by them, but by all their successors in the Ministry, consecrating and consummating under *both* kinds at the Altar in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, tho' the Laity partake of it as a Sacrament only under *one* kind.

As we have therefore justly accounted for the institution of the Holy Eucharist in *both* kinds, from Reason and Scripture, understanding it as a Sacrifice, so we flatter ourselves to have shewn that their rejecting it under this acceptation, and on the other hand pretending the two species to be requisite towards the Integrity of it as a Sacrament, to be equally destitute both of Scripture and Reason.—The present dispute being about the Eucharist only in this latter acceptation, I say, that their fond opinion of it in this respect is, first, void of Reason, as I hope will appear to every Reader who considers dispassionately what we have said in the last Section; in which I endeavoured to evince that the Integrity of the Sacrament is saved under *one* kind, and that as much is received, *viz.* the whole Substance and Grace of the Sacrament, in *one* as in *both* kinds. — It is also destitute of any foundation in Scripture, because as Bishop Mountague, cited in the beginning of this Section, owns, they have no Scripture, and no command of CHRIST of Communion in *both* kinds for the people, to bring for it: and what they pretend to offer as proofs,

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we presume to think we have sufficiently confuted in this Chapter.—Nevertheless, while the arguments we have hitherto brought for the Catholic side of the question, howsoever convincing, may not be judged by our enemies conclusive, our last resource in order to determine our difference is to Primitive Practice, Apostolic Tradition, and to the universal sense of antiquity, which, as I observed in the Third Preliminary to this controversy, must be admitted to be an unexceptionable interpreter of every law, that is in itself obscure and uncertain. To this umpire then, we willingly appeal, and I hope to make appear to be clear for the Catholic tenet in the following Chapter.

C H A P. II.

Communion in one kind has always been allowed, and occasionally practised in the Church, before she passed it into a law, and made it a part of her discipline.

WHEN our adversaries make a cry of Communion under *both* kinds having been the primitive practice, they tell us nothing we don't know, but yet nothing to the purpose. For we don't take upon us to say that Communion under *both* kinds was not primitively in use in the Church, and even the more general practice; but we say that Communion in *one* kind was also occasionally used at the same time o' day, and therefore becomes a plain indication that the Church did not look on a participation of the Lord's Supper after this manner, to be contrary to any precept of CHRIST, nor the Sacrament thereby mutilated or divided. — What St. Paul said to the Corinthians in the text aforecited, ch. I. and falsified by our good Protestant Translators, that *He who eats the Bread or drinks the Cup unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and*
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the Blood of the Lord, 1 Cor. xi. 27. is a strong insinuation, as before observed, of Communion under *one* kind having been promiscuously used in that Apostolic Age, while in consequence thereto he cautions his proselytes of becoming equally guilty of the profanation of the Body and Blood of our Lord, by an unworthy participation of it under *either* kind separately, as by *both* jointly. — But without having recourse to conjectures and absolute probabilities, we have a series of attested facts from the earliest times to decide the controversy. As these consist of historical relations, comprised under the several heads of *Communion of the Sick*, *Infant Communion*, *Private or Domestic*, and also *Public and Solemn Communion*, &c. I have no more to do than to give the plain narratives as they have been handed down to us. — For brevity's sake I shall content myself with selecting a few examples out of numbers, that are to be met with in other controversialists, or for which, for further satisfaction I refer the Reader to original records.

S E C T. I.

F I R S T E X A M P L E.

Communion of the Sick was usually administered, even in the primitive age of the Church, under one kind.

I WILL begin my proofs of Communion under *one* kind being primitively allowed, and occasionally used with the instance of *Communion of the Sick* practised in this manner. The two following facts being undeniably attested, will make good my assertion as well as two thousand. The first I have to instance, is recited at length by Eusebius Bishop of Cæsarea, the Church Historian, and is, in substance, as follows :

ONE Serapion, who laid under the state of Penance for temporizing in time of persecution, or sacrificing to idols, being in the mean while surprised with

with a mortal illness, and the symptoms of an approaching death; but still knowing that the Church, as an indulgent and tender Mother, did not in these circumstances debar the greatest sinners truly penitent, the benefit of the Sacraments, as a fortifying help in that last and dreadful passage: He accordingly, claims the privilege, by sending for his Ghostly Father to bring him the sacred *Viaticum* in his present extremity.—The Priest, by some hindrance not being able to come to him in person, intrusts the Divine Pledge, a particle of the Holy Eucharist, with a youth, to carry to his penitent, directing him to moisten it with some liquid before he gave it to the sick party. The youth complied literally with the order, gave Serapion the sacred Food, who no sooner swallowed it, but he expired. *Euseb.* l. vi. c. 44. Now from this plain narrative it manifestly appears that the Priest sent no more than the *solid part* of the Sacrament, viz. the species of *bread*, that the directions of moistening were only to facilitate it's passage to the penitent. It does not appear that the penitent in receiving the *Viaticum* of CHRIST's Body in this manner, complained of, or thought that he was defrauded of any part of the Holy Sacrament. St. Denys, Bishop of Alexandria, who lived in the third century, in a letter to a fellow Bishop, recited by Eusebius at length, relates this passage as a particular token of Almighty God's mercy and goodness to this dying penitent, and speaks of the practice being usual and customary. Here then is a fact so credibly attested, that the most wilful disingenuity cannot dispute the truth of it: Every circumstance is a confirmation of the Catholic Tenet, and the evasions our adversaries make use of, to get over it, become only a corroborative proof. In a word, they not being able to disavow the story, endeavour to disguise it's circumstances: the moistening, therefore, of the Bread, they would willingly suppose, but without any foundation, to have been a dipping it in the consecrated

consecrated Wine, and that thereby both species were taken together, as was for a while practised by some in after ages, and at present in the Eastern Church. But besides that the custom, they appeal to, was an abuse, directly contrary to the institution of CHRIST, at which the species were separated: it was moreover never heard of till the seventh century, and then on the occasion of it's condemnation in the Council of Brague. And the plea can't, otherwise, possibly have any place in the case before us. For the Historian, or St. Denys, from whom the fact is related, does not say that the Priest sent *both* species with an order to mingle them together, but that he directed the youth to moisten the *one* species of Bread, which he sent, with some *liquid*, manifestly for no other reason, than that it being dry by being kept several days for these occasions, the moistening, might, as I said before, facilitate it's passage. The third Council of Carthage, to which St. Austin subscribed, speaking of this custom, calls it *infusing* the Sacrament into the dying person's mouth. Rufinus who wrote about the time of this Council making mention of this Communion of Serapion, uses the same term. But, tho' the Council had meant the infusing of the species of Wine alone, it makes nothing against the Catholic doctrine, for whether the consecrated Bread, or the Wine alone were administered to the Sick, it was still Communion under *one* kind. But having dwelt long enough upon this first history, at least, enough to give satisfaction to every reasonable unprejudiced Reader, I proceed to the second, as credibly attested, and as well circumstantiated as the former.

THIS is an account of the dying Communion of St. Ambrose, transmitted to us by Paulinus, his Deacon and secretary, in his life of that great Light of the Church, wrote at the request of St. Austin, and dedicated to him. He relates this last solemn passage of that great man's life thus;

ST. HORONATUS,

ST. HONORATUS, the famous Bishop of Vercell, coming to visit St. Ambrose in his last illness; in the night time, being retired to take his rest, was called up by a voice from heaven to go to his penitent, in these words, thrice repeated, *Arise, stay not, he is going to die.* Honoratus, instantly obeyed the voice, brought his penitent the sacred *Viaticum* of our Lord's Body, as Paulinus expresses it, administered it unto him, and he was no sooner fortified with this heavenly food, than, as Serapion before, he expired. The fact in this case, the Saints receiving the Body alone, is clear from Paulinus's relation; and the following circumstances shew, that this was all that was requisite, and all that was expected. First, because it may be presumed the Divine Goodness, which had thus miraculously provided him with this shield of Grace, would not have bestowed it upon him imperfectly, and by halves. Secondly, that the Saint, who administered the Sacrament, would not have thought he had discharged his duty in giving it him in an undue manner, nor the Saint who received it; if it had been so, been content with it. Thirdly, that in a relation of this passage, sent to no less a man, than St. Austin, no notice was taken, as if any thing had been deficient, but on the contrary, the fact instanced as a visible token of Almighty God's watchful care over his servant, in providing him with all the helps of the Church at that last period of life: and, all these circumstances joined together, prove that administering the Sacrament to the Sick in this manner, was nothing new, nothing but what was usual, and what the Church allowed of.

THE evasions, our adversaries make use of, to stifle the strength of this evidence, are also as vain and elusive, as those they offered to the instance aforesaid. First, then, they pretend to say that the biographer, in naming only the Body, on this occasion, makes use of a figure called Synecdoche, whereby the part is taken for the whole.—But though custom in com-

mon discourse makes this kind of speech allowable in some cases; as the name of Bread is made use of to signify a man's whole nourishment, and subsistence, when we say that such an one by his labour earns his Bread; and as in the Hebrew phrase, by an invitation to eat Bread, was understood a feast or entertainment, and therefore the sacred Penmen conforming themselves to that customary way of speaking, sometimes signify the Lord's Supper by the phrase of *breaking of bread*: yet that in the administering the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Sacrament, the word Body should be used to signify also the Blood in the Protestant sense, of both being received severally, is a language unknown, and not to be met with either in the Scriptures or the Fathers; on the contrary, when *both* were given, *both* were always expressed, and our adversaries, whose business and interest it was to shew it to be otherwise, by producing some one certain example of their speaking by figure in this case, have not been able to do it.—In Serapion's case, it is plain from St. Dennys's relation, that only the solid part of the Sacrament was conveyed to him: And where the Fathers mention only the Body being given, as in St. Ambrose's case; and as Tertullian expresses himself, as we shall see hereafter, speaking of Private Communion, it is quite intelligible in the Catholic sense, believing that in *one* species we receive the substance of both; but in the Protestant acceptation, according to their pretended figure, is quite as unintelligible, an arbitrary forced exposition, and a violence offered to the rules of common speech.—But supposing this figure in the present case allowable, and that Paulinus in order to contract his discourse, would have made use of it; since Blood by that figure might as well have been made use of to imply jointly with it the Body, as the Body to signify therewith the Blood; and since the drift of his relation tended to shew that the Saint was miraculously provided with all the helps and comforts he could wish for in that last extremity; and since, in fine, the dispensing of the Blood

Blood follows always after that of the Body; I say, on these considerations, it had been more natural, if to be more concise, he would have spoken in figure, to have mentioned that which the Saint received last of all, and there to have finished his relation, where the Saint concluded this act of Religion, and with it, his mortal life in the comfortable embraces of his blessed Redeemer. These observations, I presume to think, make it clear, that the Biographer intended nothing less than the figurative sense our opponents would impose upon him: And, indeed, they themselves, not daring wholly to rely on the feeble support of this forced or pretended figure, are obliged to have recourse to another supposition, but equally weak and groundless, *viz.* that the Saint expired before he could consummate the whole; or, as Bourdieu, one of the champions for Communion in *both* kinds, expresses himself, that “he received as he could in those circumstances.” But 1st, This supposition contradicts the very drift of Paulinus’s relation, which was to shew that the Saint was provided with *all* the comforts and helps suitable to his dying state. 2dly, It offers an indignity to the wise Providence and omnipotent Power of God, as if he had not in time foreseen the dying man’s danger, or was not master of time and life to be able to protract both, long enough for the desirable intent of his partaking fully of the Divine Blessing.

SUCH are the unavoidable consequences of our adversaries rash supposition, in support of a desperate cause; it rather behoves them to give credit to undeniable facts, and not to endeavour, by idle shifts, forced figures, and groundless suppositions, to stifle their undoubted evidence to the existence of the custom of the Church, in it’s most primitive times, of communicating the Sick in *one* kind; a custom carried down to all after ages, as is to be gathered from the known practice of reserving for the service of the Sick

the species of Bread alone, because less liable to corruption, and therefore more proper to be kept than the other species; and in many other respects more fit to be administered to persons in their agonizing moments.

THE second Council of Tours, held in the year 567, ordains that the Body of our Lord should be placed on the altar, not where the images stood, but under the figure of the Cross, *Sub crucis titulo*; a plain insinuation, by the bye, that Images and Crucifixes were used in the Churches in those primitive times. Gregory of Tours, Bishop of the place at the time of this Council, speaks of certain "cases, or tabernacles, made " tower-ways, in which the Blessed Sacrament of the " Body of our Lord was reserved; and that it was " placed on the altar in time of the sacrifice." *Greg. Tor. l. i. c. 16.* And the use of *Pixes, Boxes, Doves*, i. e. vessels in that shape, for reserving the sacred *oblation* for the Sick (by which name the Fathers always understood the Body of our Lord, his Blood being generally called by it's proper name, or by the names of *cup* and *chalice*) I say the custom of having these vessels in the Church to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in, is traced up as high as St. Basil, and downwards thro' all the æra's of the Church; for instances whereof I refer the Reader to the Ecclesiastical Chronicles, and the several learned treatises written on this subject. What I have offered in brief on this head will, I hope, be deemed sufficient to satisfy every reasonable man, and dispassionate judgment.

S E C T. II.

SECOND EXAMPLE.

Infant Communion being primitively practised, was given in the species of Wine alone.

THAT Infant Communion was primitively in use in the Church, is so clear from Ecclesiastical Records, that a man must be disposed to contest all History, and evidence itself, to doubt of it; and that it was commonly administered to Infants under the species of Wine only, plainly appears from the same creditable testimonies. St. Cyprian, a stout champion for the Catholic Faith, a Bishop and illustrious martyr, between the second and third centuries, informs us in express terms, in his treatise *de Lapsis*, of this discipline of the Church, as we heard in the last chapter; and as a farther confirmation thereof, has transmitted to us the following miraculous event, to which he himself was an eye witness.

A young girl, who by some accident had partaken of bread offered to idols, was afterwards by her mother, ignorant of what had happened, brought to the Church, where, besides unusual agitations and convulsions, the Child discovered, during the time of Divine Service, when, as the custom was, the Deacon came to present her the Cup, among the other children, she fell into more extraordinary emotions, turned her face aside, shut her little mouth, and rejected the sacred element; and it being forcibly infused into her throat, she could not retain it; Almighty God miraculously testifying, as the holy Father observes, by this reluctance of the child, his own abhorrence of abiding in a stomach defiled with the impure oblation to idols. But the main inference, to our present purpose, to be drawn from this passage, is, that nothing but the Cup

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was presented to this child; for tho', as she had swallowed before the bread offered to idols, the consecrated Bread of the Holy Eucharist, particularly if it had been moistened, might with no more difficulty have been taken by her, yet we don't find this expedient was ever thought of, the species of Wine was judged more proper for the age of Infants, when, out of respect to the Holy Eucharist, it was the custom of the Church to receive it fasting; and for this reason to give the species of bread moistened in any liquid (excepting the case of dying persons) was looked upon as dishonouring the sacred symbol; much less did they think, at that time o' day of mixing the two species; a plain indication that they believed the Whole Sacrament to be contained under *one* kind; and that they were not sensible of any Divine Precept forbidding it in this manner. But whether this reason deserves any weight or no, or that the discipline of the Church at that time, of giving to Infants the Communion in the species of Wine rather than of Bread, subsisted on any other account, it is certain that the custom was such. St. Cyprian, in the instance related, expressly takes notice of nothing else but the Cup being presented to the child, and of the consequence of it, *viz.* "That the Blood, *says he*, would not stay in her stomach, being defiled with the impure oblation."

THIS discipline of the Church we find continued for several after-ages. To pass over numberless other proofs thereof, Jobias, living between the fifth and sixth centuries, informs us that the method the Church used with Children there, was, first "to baptize them; " after that to anoint them, *i. e.* to give them the Sacrament of Confirmation, and lastly to give them " the Holy Blood. *Jobias de Verb. Incar.* l. iv. c. 18. But if administering the Holy Eucharist in *one* kind had been contrary to any ordinance of CHRIST, or mutilating and dividing the Sacrament, it could no more have been given to Infants in that manner than

to adult persons, and therefore this custom subsisting in those primitive times shews that the contrary opinion prevailed.

BUT to this our adversaries reply, That, admitting Infant Communion under the species of Wine alone to have been the primitive practice (for it is what none of them dare absolutely deny) the argument they think yet defective; because they suppose it to be grounded on a belief that was erroneous, *to wit*, Infant Communion they imagine to have been primitively made a necessary condition of salvation; that children destitute thereof, were judged by the Church to be in the state of perdition, and in *this* they tax her of error, and therefore think that, from one abuse to another abuse, nothing can be concluded. But alas! their censure, in every respect, is too precipitous: the truth of the matter is this; the Church always believed Infants to be susceptible of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist as well as of Baptism; and that therefore the caution St. Paul gives, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*, 1 Cor. xi. 28. was of no more force against Infants partaking of the one, than that of our Saviour, *Teach and baptize*, against their receiving the other: But yet she holds these Sacraments to appertain to them differently, *viz.* That Baptism, in cases at least of mortality, is obligatory; the other not so. *Unless you are born of Water and the Holy Ghost, you shall not*, says CHRIST, *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; but, being thus regenerated in CHRIST, and in that Infant state out of a capacity of forfeiting their inheritance, acquired in Baptism, by any actual sin, nothing else can be absolutely wanting, nothing necessary; because if the participation of the Holy Eucharist had still been requisite, and that Infants debarred of it were objects of Divine wrath, it would follow that a child could be damned in the state of Grace and innocence; a consequence shocking to think of, and highly injurious to the Divine Justice. By Baptism we are regenerated
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in CHRIST, and united to him; by the Eucharist we are nourished by him: the one gives spiritual life, the other is a means of preserving it when it can be lost by sin, which cannot be the case of children not yet arrived to the years of malice; therefore the Church always understood these two texts differently, *viz. Unless you eat you shall not have life in you*, Jo. lx. 52. And the other, *Unless you are born, &c. — you shall not enter the kingdom of Heaven*, Jo. xx. The latter she thinks to imply a necessity of Baptism; the other, as I just said, not equally an obligation of Communion: But, with regard to Infants, what may be administered to them, or what they may be dispensed with, according to the Church's discretion, *viz. a mere matter of discipline, but no precept*. She therefore, for several hundred years, judged proper to allow of Infant Communion; and since, for her just reasons, has found it more convenient to supersede that practice.

BUT whether this point was thought, by the primitive Church to have been a necessary condition of salvation or no, I cannot see what it can avail our adversaries argument against Communion under *one* kind; for being judged unnecessary, as it certainly is, and always was, 'tis a just matter of surprize that communicating Infants without any necessity, she should chuse to do it in an illicit and irregular manner. But if she had judged it necessary, her communicating them in *one* kind had become a plain indication that she believed the Sacrament to be entire and undivided under each species; and administering it thus, no way repugnant to CHRIST's institution.

AND in this point, which is the whole subject of our present inquiry, it is certain that she was so constant and uniform in her belief, as never to make any scruple of administering the Holy Eucharist under each species *alone*, as occasions required.

THEREFORE, as we have already seen it to have been the primitive practice of the Church to give the Commu-

Communion to Infants under the species of Wine, so we find that she also made no difficulty of giving to children of riper years; not yet arrived to an age capable of malice, on the following occasions, in the species of bread only. It is very well known, from Ecclesiastical History, that it was the custom of the Church to distribute to these the remains of the consecrated Bread, after the Communion of the faithful adult. Tho' CHRIST himself, that is to say, his sacred Body, couched under the Sacramental symbols, is absolutely incapable of corruption, yet as our Blessed Lord was pleased to operate no visible miracle to our senses, in this august mystery, he would not exempt the accidents themselves, from being subject to the alterations, they had been liable to before the change of their substances; and therefore the Church, in order to prevent, what would appear shocking to human sense, by such a decay, used anciently to destroy, one way or other, in a becoming manner, the particles that remained, after the Communion of the Faithful. The practice of the Church of Jerusalem, in regard to these sacred remains, was to burn them; and the practice also of burning the sacred species, after they had gone to decay, we find established by a national synod of our primitive Saxon Church, cited by Guthrie, l. iv. of his *Hist. of Engl.* and by other authors. What these Churches consumed by fire, the Church of Constantinople distributed to innocent children. *Vid. Evag.* l. ii. c. 35. looking on them as the holiest vessels, and consequently the fittest to receive them. And this latter practice is confessed by M. *de la Roque*, a French Minister, to have subsisted anciently in France, by an order of a Council. The just named Evagrius relates a miraculous event, by the Will of God, operated by these sacred remains on a Jewish child, who having mixed himself in the Church with some Christian children, and receiving with them some particles of the immaculate Body of CHRIST (as the

Protestant Minister just mentioned translates it) and being by his father, (who kept a glass-house) in hatred to CHRIST and to this august Sacrament, thrown into a furnace, was, after some days, found walking in it like the children in the Babylonian furnace, untouched by the fire and unhurt.

THE custom itself here mentioned, of giving grown-up children the sacred particles of the consecrated Bread, after the Communion of the faithful, is as notorious from History, and undeniable, as the Communion of younger Infants, before alleged, under the species of Wine alone; and both practices, as we have also seen, received the visible sanction of God's own approbation by his working, in behalf of each, a most wonderful miracle. From the whole it is to be concluded, 1st, That the primitive Church made no scruple of administering the Holy Communion of CHRIST's Body and Blood under *one* kind. 2dly, That she therefore judged the Sacrament to be in this manner entire, without diminution or division, and no ordinance of CHRIST violated by the practice. 3dly, That Almighty God, by two astonishing miracles, was pleased to justify both her practice and her belief in this point.

S E C T. III.

T H I R D E X A M P L E.

The opinion of the Church, at all times, concerning the point in question, is gathered from private or domestic Communion being anciently allowed in One kind.

THE evidences we have already produced for the Church's ancient practice and belief concerning the point in question, seemed to render any further proofs, which are to be brought from private and public Communion, supernumerary and needless. I shall, therefore, to spare my Reader's patience, in running over these heads, content myself with a naked relation of matters of fact, and a brief refutation of our adversaries evasive answers to them, and draw only such inferences as will be obvious, and cannot be excused. Any further reasonings, I apprehend, will be unnecessary, because, if the facts are clear, they are conclusive of themselves, and must carry with them conviction. Private or domestic Communion occurs first to be taken notice of, it being plainly mentioned by the most primitive Fathers, and was used on several accounts and sundry occasions.

THE method, anciently, of the devout faithful, in this respect was, after they had communicated in the Church, or in their public assemblies, to take some part of the Holy Eucharist home with them, to indulge their private devotion of a daily Communion, which we find was the constant practice of the infant and fervent age of the Church: and as the species of Wine was less proper for keeping, they only took with them the consecrated Bread for the pious intent, Tertullian, *de Oratione*, c. 24. makes express mention of this custom of taking home and keeping the Body of our Lord; and elsewhere speaks of the sacred

Bread which the Christians eat in secret: so he expresses himself, plainly insinuating the species of Bread alone, and saying not a word of the cup. St. Cyprian, in his book *de Lapsis* shews also the same practice.

THIS custom began in time of persecution, when frequent public assemblies were dangerous, and even impracticable; but yet, to content the piety of the faithful, or for other reasons, not immediately discontinued, after the times became more peaceable. St. Basil, *Ep.* 289, also takes notice of the pious recluses and hermits of those times, communicating in the same manner. Their strict retirement, their often having no Priest among them, their distance from the public churches, were the reasons for their not frequenting them, but on the great and most solemn festivals; and on this account had not the opportunity of partaking often of the Divine mysteries, but by a private Communion within their own cells. In these circumstances, the species of wine could not be preserved for the pious purpose; and the Holy Father observes, that at their communicating in public, the Sacrament was put into their own hands, to consummate what they pleased, with the liberty of reserving the rest for domestic Communion: and he adds, that it was a matter of indifference whether they received only one or several particles: an expression which can only have relation to the solid part of the Sacrament, observing yet further, directly to our purpose, that their private Communions, with what they took home with them, were no less entire and effectual than their public Communions in the Churches. St. Jerom *Ep. ad pamen.* insinuating, as De la Roque confesses, the same pious practice of a private and daily Communion in their own houses, to have subsisted at Rome in his time, draws the same conclusion St. Basil had before, of the grace and integrity of it; "Do we not, says he, receive the same JESUS CHRIST at home, as in our public Churches?" *Jerom. ibid.*

St. IRENÆUS, as the same De la Roque owns, *Hist. Eueb.* 2. par. c. 15. p. 176. mentions another custom subsisting among the primitive Christians, *viz.* of sending the consecrated elements to one another, even to the most distant parts, as from Rome to Asia, in token of their being in the same Communion; also of carrying it about them in their most dangerous voyages, by sea and land. St. Ambrose, *de Observ. Frat.* relates the miraculous preservation of his brother Satyrus from being drowned, by having the sacred pledge, wrapped up in linnen, tied about his neck; when being shipwrecked at sea, and throwing himself into the water, he was, beyond all human expectation, cast safe on shore.

Now what these fervent Christians privately carried about them, wrapt in linnen, what the others took home with them, for their domestic Communions, could only be the solid part of the Holy Eucharist, *i. e.* the consecrated Bread.

THESE, then, are a few of the numberless instances antiquity furnishes us with, of domestic Communion under *one* kind: facts so evident that our adversaries themselves, not daring to dispute the truth of them, are forced to have recourse to the most evasive answers, to elude their consequence. At one time they inveigh against the practice of domestic Communion, as an abuse and prophanation: and what is the natural inference from this charge? such as they ought to be ashamed of, who give occasion to it; *viz.* that the Church, in her primitive and purest times, was guilty of allowing a sacrilegious practice—that the glorious Martyrs, the pious recluses, and the most religious of that holy age, concurred in the guilt, by accepting of the allowance—and that the greatest Ornaments and Lights of the Church, the Holy Fathers, were qually guilty in abetting it. But is it not more just to conclude, that our modern innovators are bold and temerarious in laying this injurious indictment to their Mother Church.

Church in her purest times; and to those eminent Saints, who distinguished themselves in the defence of her cause by their learning, their sanctity of life, and the effusion of their blood against Infidels, Heretics, and Unbelievers? Is it not again, rather an evident token that the Church always looked on Communion in *one* or *both* kinds to have been a matter of discipline which she had a power to alter; for just reasons, thro' the Divine Wisdom infused into her, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, according as the circumstances of times suggested and required? Therefore the Church has judged convenient to settle a new discipline now, but without condemning the old one, that subsisting heretofore. In those primitive and holy times of the Church, when it lay under the storm of persecution, and that public assemblies were difficult of access, and not so frequent; when, at the same time, the fervour of the primitive Christians prompted them to a daily participation of the awful mysteries; when these supernatural helps were necessary, in order to obtain a greater flow of Almighty God's grace, to bear up against the inundation of evils, that overwhelmed and surrounded them on every side. Then the Church, like a provident Mother, allowed her children more frequent participation of these means of grace, in indulging them the liberty of a daily domestic Communion, to support them under the various pressures, they laboured under. Since these persecutions have ceased, since the difficulty of access to public places of worship subsists no longer, and that the ardent fervency and lively faith, so conspicuous in those primitive champions of the Church, are now much cooled, and visibly decayed among her children; she, in her great wisdom, has thought proper to alter her discipline in this point, by forbidding Domestic Communion; and by condescending to a participation of the awful mysteries not becoming so frequent. For, in a word, if we do but call to mind what is transmitted

to us, concerning the fervency of those ancient times, when private houses were converted, as it were, into sanctuaries of Religion, and Almighty God honoured *there* with a more becoming decency than *now*, perhaps, in our Churches; we cannot wonder that the sacred symbols were entrusted with the faithful then, and permitted them to carry home with them; nor from the alteration of circumstances since, be surprised that the Church has now altered her discipline. In the mean while, in consequence of the aforesaid observations, the Church, as to her primitive practice and discipline, is fully cleared of all imputation of sacrilegious prophanation and abuse, which the Reformers would fasten upon her; and, on the other hand, the liberty, indulged the fervent Christians of ancient times, of reserving the Blessed Sacrament in their private oratories, for their daily adoration and spiritual food, justifies the practice of the Church at this present time, of keeping the same in our public Churches, for the like pious purposes; but especially to be at hand for the consolation of the Sick, and a *Viaticum* to them in their passage out of Time into Eternity, as often as there may be a call for it, on these critical emergencies.

OUR adversaries, in order to invalidate the testimony of Domestic Communion, in favour of the point in question, Communion in *one* kind, having, as we have just heard, first impeached the practice as an abuse; their next refuge is to say that it is gathered from the ancient accounts that these private Communion, whether justifiable or not in themselves, were, however, in *both* kinds permitted to be taken home for that purpose: but waving the truth of this assertion, as to particular cases, which it would be too tedious and unnecessary to examine into, I beg leave to say, that tho' in the primitive times the faithful might have more generally communicated in *both* kinds in their public assemblies, and sometimes for present Communion,

nion, took both species home with them, this does not amount to the least shadow of a proof, that they did not also, reserve the species of Bread alone for a longer space of time; the other species, as more liable to corruption, being improper for that intent: and the examples, we have produced above, shew this to have been certainly the case.

OUR adversaries return again to their charge of Domestic Communion having been an abuse, by appealing to two Councils of Spain, that of Saragoza, the other the second Council of Toledo forbidding it; in these it being declared, that “such as consummate
“not the Eucharist from the hands of the Bishop,
“were to be looked upon as sacrilegious and excom-
“municated persons.” But a small degree of candour, in relating the whole drift of this decree, would have made our opponents ashamed of offering it as an objection against the primitive practice of Domestic Communion. The abuse then, these Councils endeavoured to remove, was the hypocritical practice of some Heretics of those times, called *Priscillianists*, who, presenting themselves to the Altar, would consummate neither species in public, but take one or both home with them, for some sacrilegious purposes.

THEIR last plea, to invalidate our argument from Domestic Communion in *one* kind, so irrefragably attested, is to say, that none took *one* species alone home with them for a private Communion, who had not communicated first under *both* species in their public assemblies: but, be it so, if CHRIST has left us a peremptory command, so often as we partake of the Holy Eucharist, that we must receive it in *both* kinds, this Divine Precept could no more be dispensed with in a private than a public Communion. But from all the testimonies of private Communion, I have brought thro’ this Section, it evidently appears that the Christians primitively did communicate, without scruple or reserve, under *one* kind, it therefore becomes an undeniable

undeniable proof that they never looked upon Communion in this manner to be sacrilegious or forbidden by any Divine Precept: However, to stop the mouths at once of these trifling wranglers, beyond all reply, we have numerous instances to produce from primitive Records, even of public Communion being also practised under *one* kind, which will be more properly the subject of a separate Section.

S E C T. IV,

FOURTH EXAMPLE,

The same is gathered from primitive instances of Public Communion under One kind.

TO argue from an avowed practice of the Church to the lawfulness of it, as we have done in the foregoing Sections, is entirely logical and conclusive; but to infer the legality of it in itself, from it's having been forbid, at a time, and in certain circumstances, may carry more the appearance of a paradox than of a serious argument; yet I presume to think this way of reasoning holds good in the following instance. The Manicheans, a sect of Heretics who abhorred wine, as a creature of the Devil, who further made no account of the infinite price of our Redemption, the effusion of CHRIST'S Blood on the Cross, but looked on the whole mystery of CHRIST'S Death and Passion as a mere phantom and illusion; in consequence to these principles, at the eating of the Lord's Supper constantly refused to taste of the Cup; tho', in order to conceal their dissimulation, as a means to have an opportunity of spreading the venom of their erroneous doctrine under the outward appearance of being orthodox Catholics, they affected to mix themselves with the true Faithful, even at the participation of the awful mysteries, St. Leo, Pope, from
D d d whom

whom we have this information, first took notice of their profound hypocrisy; but his successor, St. Gelasius, pursued them into their close hold, and, by ordering Communion in *both* kinds, under the penalty of excommunication, he drove them out of their shelter, under which, till then, they had lain so successfully concealed. The tenour of his decree runs thus: "We have discovered," says he, "that some persons, in taking the sacred Body, only abstain from the sacred chalice, who (because they seem therein to adhere to I know not what superstition) let them either communicate under *both* kinds, or let them be deprived as well of one as of the other, because the division of one and the same mystery cannot be without the guilt of sacrilege." From these facts the following reflections obviously occur, making good my assertion above, that from this very prohibition of Communion under *one* kind, it's lawfulness in itself is to be concluded; because, 1st, By these Heretics concealing themselves under the cover of Catholic Communion, when they professedly only partook of it in the species of Bread, it is plain that this way of communicating was nothing singular at that time, but what Catholics themselves promiscuously did, or else it could not have served as a cloak or means of disguise to them. 2dly, By the *because*, or reason alleged by the Pope, within the parenthesis of the decree, saying, that "they adhered to he did not know what superstition." It appears that it was not set forth on account of any abuse in the practice itself; for this, if it had been a superstition, was easily explained; but for the *hidden superstitious motive* influencing these Heretics into the practice, which was not to be accounted for; when by looking on the sacred Blood as an object of abhorrence, they effectually "divided the mystery," as the holy Pope observes in the close of the decree; and in this were guilty of a sacrilege, while Catholics, tho' receiving equally under *one* kind, yet believing it to contain the

the virtue and substance of both, and not refraining from the other species out of any superstitious abhorrence of it, could not incur the same guilt. 3dly, The very stile and tenour of the decree shew that Gelasius looked on Communion in *one* or *both* kinds, to have been in itself merely a matter of discipline, alterable at the Church's pleasure, according to the different vicissitude and exigency of circumstances; because, otherwise, instead of the reason alleged for the decree, CHRIST's own institution and command of Communion in *both* kinds had been the most obvious, the most proper and only reason that should have been given for it; in which respect it would not have been an ordinance of a new discipline, but a declaration of what had been the invariable discipline and practice of the Church at all times settled and ordained by our Blessed Lord himself; but the holy Pontif full well knew the contrary to be true, *viz.* that the manner of receiving the Holy Eucharist was left by CHRIST undetermined: He was apprised of the primitive avowed practices of the Church, of Domestic Communion, Infant Communion, and the Communion of the Sick in *one* kind, and yet, tho' I say he could not be ignorant of these notorious practices, he never took it into his head to find fault with them.

BUT, in fine, if, as Gratian, p. 170, 171. relates this act of Pope Gelasius, in his gloss on the decree, the principal intent thereof was to put a stop to an undoubted sacrilege, some Priests of that heretical sect were guilty of; who in celebrating even the adorable mysteries at the altar, consummated only the Bread, and abstained from the Cup: In these circumstances, I say, the riddle is unravelled at once; for such, no doubt were directly guilty of a violation of CHRIST's command to the Apostles and their successors, to celebrate the mystery of his Death and Passion under *both* kinds; and therefore, as Gelasius observes, these people, by their contrary practice, properly divided the mystery,

or represented it imperfectly; but this has no manner of relation to a Lay Communion.

On summing up the whole, the decree so often trumped up by our adversaries, and magnified into an objection unanswerable, in the last sense we have now considered it, makes just nothing for their purpose; and in the sense we discussed it before, concludes absolutely against them; while it rather becomes a direct insinuation of Communion under *one* kind, having been the promiscuous practice of the faithful at that time; and the two following plain and undeniable instances of public Communion, practised by the whole Catholic Church under *one* kind, will, I hope, put the point out of the reach of cavil, and misrepresentation, and be sufficient to overcome the most inflexible skepticism.

THE first of these instances I am going to appeal to was the ancient practice of the Latin Church, of Communion in *one* kind on Good Friday, even by the Priest himself at the altar, for the reasons, and in the manner we will now explain. The Church on this day did not anciently consecrate the elements at the altar, no more than she does at present, but consummated the species of Bread alone, which had been consecrated the day before, and laid up in a secret place prepared for it, as a commemoration of CHRIST'S Death and Burial, *Hugo. de St. Vict. Erud. Theol.* l. 3. c. 20. taking notice of this practice, assigns the Catholic reason for the licitness of it; because says he, under each species the Body and Blood are received; and that the species of wine cannot well be kept. This practice is also expressly mentioned by Alcuinus, Amalarius, and others, about the eighth century; and as the origin of it is not known, we have a right to conclude that it was transmitted down from the most primitive times. I forbear to tire the reader with a detail of these ancient authorities at length, they being to be met with in *Bibliotheca Patrum*, *Tom. de Div. Officiis*, and other authors.

I MUST now observe that if this ancient practice of the primitive Church is by our adversaries deemed sacrilegious, they must be so rash as to condemn her of chusing the most solemn day of the year, the day on which we celebrate the mysteries of our Redemption, to perpetrate so detestable a profanation; and therefore more detestable they who are guilty of a censure of their Mother Church, which is attended with such injurious consequences.

THE next fact I appeal to is an ancient practice of the Greek Church which goes still further than that of the Latin Church just recited; their custom was, and is at present, not to consecrate on fasting days, out of a decorum of not confounding the joy and solemnity of the sacrifice with the sadness of the fast; whence, in Lent, they consecrate only on Sundays and Saturdays, the days they do not fast; on the other days they offer up and shew the people the Sacrament reserved on those two solemn days, which they call the *imperfect* Mass, or the Mass of the *presanctified*; because the Eucharist they offer on those days was consecrated or sanctified the two precedent days, in the Mass they call *perfect*, and what they receive is the sacred Bread alone: this they bring to the altar from the vestry: this they elevate, adore, and offer incense to: it is the sacred Bread they mix, without the preface of any prayer, with unconsecrated wine and water; and which, in fine, they distribute to the people, *i. e.* to Communicants: so that throughour the Lent, the holiest time of the year, five days of the week they communicate under the species of bread alone. The antiquity of this custom cannot be contested, it being to be met with in the Council of Trullo, in the 6th Century, *Conc. Trull. c. 52.* and even derives it's date much higher, *viz.* from the Council of Laodicea, in the fourth age, and the particulars of this ceremony are to be seen at length in the *Eucholog. Grat. & Bibl.* Pp. T. II. what deserves particularly our attention, with,

with regard to this custom, is, that, tho' it plainly appears, the Greeks receive nothing but the Body of our Lord on these days, yet they change nothing in their usual formularies. The sacred gifts are always named in the plural number; and in their prayers they mention both Body and Blood: so stedfast was their opinion of the virtue and substance of *both* being fully and entirely contained under *one* species. It must indeed be owned that the modern Greeks seem not to be fond of espousing Communion under *one* kind, and therefore usually at this present time o'day, they drop some of the precious Blood in form of a Cross on the sacred Body, which is reserved for the office of the *presanctified*; but whatever they would mean by this ceremony, it cannot avail their purpose of communicating under *both* kinds.

WE find, 'tis true, in all liturgies, both Greek and Latin, a direction to Priests at the celebration of the holy mysteries, to make use of the ceremony of dropping the consecrated Bread into the chalice, to signify CHRIST's Resurrection, *to wit*, That as the mystical separation of the Body and Blood represents his Death, so this mixture of *both* species should figurate their union again at his Resurrection. But whether the modern Greek ceremony of sprinkling the Wine on the Bread be directed to the same intent, or no, it is wholly unprecedented and without foundation in the institution of CHRIST, or in any other part of Scripture, or even in tradition; and whereas the Wine is dropt in a very small quantity, which is also immediately by them dried over a chafingdish, it cannot be thought to answer the end of conveying *both* species to the receiver: therefore whatsoever they affect to mean by this ceremony, they in fact, by receiving the Bread thus sprinkled, communicate no more in *both* kinds, than their forefathers, who knew of no such ceremony.

I don't think it worth while to take up my Reader's time in refuting another idle imagination of the modern Greeks, never dreamt of before nor since, but by themselves,

themselves, *viz.* That the mixture of the consecrated Bread with unconsecrated wine, so sanctifies the latter, as to transubstantiate it into the sacred Blood. Nothing was ever thought of, by antiquity, to operate this miraculous change, but the express words of CHRIST. St. Amb. de Initiat. and other holy Fathers, positively aver it. This mixture, no doubt, gives the wine an inferior kind of sanctification; such as our Blessed Saviour's Body, when he was on earth, visible in human flesh, gave to the cloaths that covered him, to the instruments of his Passion, *viz.* the Cross on which he was laid, and to the very nails that fastened him to it; and such as also St. Bernard explains it, saying that "The wine mixed with the consecrated Host, tho' not consecrated by that solemn and particular benediction, which changes it into the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, becomes yet sacred by touching the sacred Body of our Lord." And such a sanctification, it must be owned, Alcuinus *de Div. Offic.* and Amalarius hinted at long before, and no one now will dispute it. But this sanctification is far wide of what the modern Greeks would pretend it to be, *viz.* of rendering the elements *consecrated*. Therefore, to return from this digression to the Conclusion, which we think to ensue from the customs aforesaid, with regard to the point in question, we say, that from the whole it must be granted, that as on Good Friday among the Latins or Western Church, and five days of the week of Lent among the Greeks, the consecrated Bread is consummated no other way than with unconsecrated wine, even by the Priest at the Altar, that, I say, at these times they must be judged to communicate in *one* kind only.

C H A P. III.

The Conclusion,

A summing up the Evidence.

WE have now, Christian Reader, taken a faithful and impartial survey of the practice of the Church, with regard to the point in question, from it's most ancient and purest times. We have seen that from the very beginning it was her custom to communicate the Sick under the species of Bread, and Infants in the species of Wine alone; that in the most difficult times of the Church, when frequent public assemblies were impracticable, she made no scruple to allow her fervent children the liberty of taking home with them the sacred Eucharist, in the species of bread only, to indulge their devotion in a Private or Domestic Communion. We have seen her adversaries, unable to withstand the torrent of these evidences to a Communion in *one* kind, reduced to the desperate shift of calumniating the primitive pious practices, as so many abuses; of traducing the Church's discipline in her purest times, and taxing her glorious Martyrs, renowned Confessors, and her brightest ornaments for virtue and learning, with the guilt of sacrilege and profanation in coming into it; but how insolent, rather, and presumptuous are they, in laying this charge against them, the thing itself speaks. We have moreover heard, that not only on the aforementioned extraordinary occasions the Church has always allowed of Communion in *one* kind; but that from the Manichees concealing themselves under it's cover, in participating of the Lord's Supper in that manner, we gather, and may absolutely conclude that Public Communion in *one* kind was become promiscuously the practice of the faithful about the 7th century, confirmed

firmed since by the notorious customs of the Latin Church on Good Friday, and of the Greek five days of the week in Lent, of communicating also the same way. From facts so evident, this plain consequence necessarily ensues, as a conclusion from it's premises, That the Council of Constance, in the 15th century, in defining Communion under *one* kind to be as good and sufficient as under *both*, judged conformably to the tradition of all ages; and that by passing it into a law or an obligation to the faithful, she has only made use of the power, she is vested with by CHRIST, with respect to matters of discipline, and what she has perpetually practised relatively to the administration of the Holy Eucharist itself; sometimes giving it in *one* or *both* kinds, as a matter of indifference; at another, as the circumstances of times required, ordering it under *both*; and now since, in *one* kind alone, ready to permit it again in *both*, when it may appear convenient for the public good, as the Council of Trent has expressly declared, *Seff. 21. Post. Can.* We have a precedent of this concession from the Council of Basil, which granted the Cup to the Bohemians on condition they should acknowledge CHRIST was received whole and entire under each kind; and that it was not necessary to receive *both*. It was therefore also debated in the Council of Trent, Whether the same indulgence should be allowed to Germany and France, as a means to pave the way for the reduction of the Heretics of those dominions. At last, for just reasons, a discretionary liberty was lodged in the Pope, to act in this matter as he should judge convenient, and occasions require, *Seff. 22. In fine.*

IN consequence of this decree, at the instance of the Emperor Ferdinand, Pope Pius IV. following the example of Paul III. by his Brief of 1563, granted the use of the Cup in Germany on certain conditions; but, instead of this paternal indulgence producing the intended effect, of bringing these Heretics to relent of

their obstinacy, and to return to their obedience to the Church; it only elated them with a vain conceit of an imaginary victory, and induced them to charge the Church falsely with having acknowledged herself in an error, by her contrary practice. But maugre their malicious calumnies, it will always be true that it belongs to the Church, under the influence and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to judge what is essential and what indifferent, in the administration of the Sacraments; and thro' the power she is vested with by CHRIST, that she has the liberty of altering her discipline in these matters, as she finds convenient: By this authority the changes in regard to Communion in *one* or *both* kinds, as we have seen, have from time to time been made. It is upon the same principles she has always acted, both primitively and recently; *to wit*, she has judged that the essence and integrity of the Holy Eucharist is saved, and the whole source of Grace, CHRIST himself, is received under *either* kind alone: that CHRIST has given no express directions how it is to be dispensed to the faithful, but left it entirely to her, to determine it according to the different vicissitude and exigency of circumstances; and that therefore neither any violence is offered to the Divine institution, nor the faithful defrauded of any part of the Sacrament, by being obliged to receive it under *one* kind.

Thus, as the principles upon which the new discipline was grounded, were solid, and the practice itself what the people had been used to; so it was introduced into the Church under the sanction of a law, without any noise or disturbance, and no contradiction offered to it for 800 years; when Peter Dresde, an obscure fellow, a mere laic, and schoolmaster of Prague, took into his head to cavil at the discipline of the Church, so long and peaceably established: Luther afterwards, as we heard in the Introduction, came into the opposition more out of hatred to the Church, and from a spirit of contradiction, than from any substantial

tial reason he could pretend to allege for it, when he declared that, to spite the Church or a Council, he should have been equally disposed to go over to the other side of the question: And when, in fine, but a little before, he took Carolestadius to task, who had hurried the alteration of the Church's discipline in this point without his concurrence, for "seeming," as he said, "to lay the whole stress of the Reformation on these things of nothing." *Ep. ad Casp. Gunol. T. 11. Ep. 56.*

IN the mean while, as the attempt of an invasion on the Church's discipline, of Communion in *one* kind, alarmed immediately the whole Catholic world, and the change was not received even by the Reformers themselves but with some reluctance and difficulty; so on the other hand, the first introduction of the Catholic discipline into the Church, without any such reluctance or resistance made to it, without any noise or contradiction, as above observed, becomes a collateral proof to the sense of the whole body of the faithful concerning the lawfulness of it.

PRACTICES that have gained the repute of being invariable, are not to be departed from; they are deemed, as it were, our own property, and we are jealous of any encroachment upon it. Infant Baptism is an instance of this kind, the necessity whereof the faithful have always been so persuaded of, tho' it has no certain foundation for it than tradition, that they never were to be brought to part with it: and therefore when rejected by a handful of innovators, the Anabaptists, all the rest of the Christian world appeared against them: but, on the other hand, practices judged to be of an indifferent nature meet with a different fate; *to wit*, are continued, discontinued, or altered without occasioning any disturbance: Thus the administration of Baptism by immersion, was changed into sprinkling, without any one being alarmed at it. Communion of Infants, when laid aside, met with

no resistance, because thought not to be necessary. Communion in *one* kind is again one of the articles of indifference, what the people had been used to by a voluntary practice, and therefore were no way startled at it's passing into a law: accordingly the tenour of the Council of Constance's decree, which enacted it as such, imports, that she only made that *obligatory* out of a regard to an uniformity of discipline, which had before become customary by an almost general practice: a practice likely proceeding at first, from the crowd of Communicants flocking to the Church on great and solemn festivals.

THE other reasons, however, besides that now alleged, which induced the Church to render the practice *obligatory* (to be met with in *Catech. ad Paroch.*) are solid and substantial: One amongst the rest was, to prevent casual and involuntary prophanations, by spilling any drops of the consecrated Wine, not easily to be avoided among a multitude of Communicants. And tho' this reason is reputed childish by a late antagonist, it can only be deemed such by those of his way of thinking, who don't believe the precious Blood of CHRIST to be couched under the Sacramental symbols; or by those, who being but believers in name, are so much Infidels in practice, as to be heedless of so great an irreverence.

ANOTHER of the Church's reasons for settling the new discipline, was out of regard to some constitutions, which cannot endure the taste or smell of wine; and this reason was judged a solid one by the Protestant synod of Poitiers, An. 1560, in which it was decreed, c. xiii. art. 7. of the Lord's Supper, That "the Bread of our Lord's Supper ought to be administered to those who cannot drink wine."

BUT the most substantial reason, with every true believer and son of the Church, is, That she has judged fit to determine it so. The Church, I say, whom under pain of being reputed as Heathens or Publicans,

Publicans, we are bound to submit to, *He, says CHRIST, that does not bear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen or a Publican*, Matt. xviii. 17. The Church, which, according to St. Paul, CHRIST has entrusted with his credentials, the Holy Sacraments, and with the power of dispensing them by her ministers, in such a manner as she, in her supernatural wisdom, shall judge convenient. *Let a man, says he, so account of us, as the ministers of CHRIST, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* 1 Cor. iv. 1.

BUT, while this reason is sufficient to command a due submission from the Church's faithful children, it was, visibly, the contrary spirit of self-conceit, disobedience, and contradiction that influenced the Reformers into an opposition to the Church, in this as well as in every other article in which they depart from her faith. Luther, as we have heard, frankly confessed it.

HYPOCRISY is also another main ingredient into their opposition. They first become guilty of a real sacrilege themselves, and then, in order to hide it, would father an imaginary one on their Mother Church; viz. they flatly contradict CHRIST's institution of the Holy Eucharist, with regard to it's essence; next endeavour to palliate their crime, by shewing an affected scrupulosity for the manner of dispensing it: In a word, they themselves, as I said in the beginning, by denying the Real Presence, take away from their followers the whole Sacrament; the whole source of Grace, CHRIST himself couched under the Sacramental symbols, and then no less ridiculously than falsely, would charge the Church with defrauding the faithful of a part. But, in spite of their slanderous clamours and calumnies, the Church, *guided by the Spirit of truth, which leads her into all truth*, (John x. 13.) will continue ever as irreprovable in her discipline, as she, in matters of faith, is free from error; maugre all their stratagems

stratagems to undermine her, she will, in virtue of CHRIST's promise, stand her ground, so that even *the gates of hell shall never be able to prevail against her.* Matt. xvi. 18.

P O S T S C R I P T.

AS in the Article, we have now discussed, I made profession of pursuing the plan, I worked upon in the foregoing Essay of the *Nature of a Church Reformation considered*, of shewing the vanity of the pretence, that as alleged for bringing about that Church Revolution: it might here be expected, before I take leave of my Reader, that I should clear the Church of every impeachment, great or small, that is laid against her; but having already exceeded the limits, I prescribed myself, in canvassing the point in question; to engage further in these lighter skirmishes, would swell this Appendix into too great a size; besides that, I apprehend, there nothing more remains to be objected, but what has been either directly refuted in the former Essay, or of which the fallacy will not immediately appear, by giving an eye to the principles that have been just settled. But the greatest discouragement from entering any farther into the controversy, is, the unreasonableness of the generality of our Protestant adversaries, who are not to be contented upon any terms: unrelenting spirits, whose business seems to be to wrangle, not to be convinced, and their view not to have their old doubts and difficulties resolved, but to start up new ones, and to make use of every stratagem to keep open the breach between us.

THE constituent ingredients of Heresy being, as we have lately observed, *self-conceit*, the *spirit of contradiction*, and *disobedience*; it has been the humour of Heretics of all times and denominations, not only to
withdraw

withdraw their submission to their Mother Church in matters of faith, but also to make slight of her laws, to cavil at her practices, the most holy and most ancient, and to calumniate her best regulated discipline: and our late pretended Reformers have not receded a step out of the paths of their forefathers in this conduct. It was a part of policy in them to adhere close to it; for, by raising a great noise and clamour against their Mother Church, tho' about trifles, they at least amused the ignorant, and deluded the unwary: by traducing her, and charging her with some irregularities, true or false, they prevented their proselytes taking notice of very essential ones of their own; as a man abandoned in his morals, and bankrupt in reputation, endeavours to extenuate his own infamy by blackening his neighbour's: Therefore despairing of contenting persons of this character, who are not to be contented at any rate, I address myself to the more rational part of Protestants; to the moderate and dispassionate, who may have no other view than that charity and unanimity of minds should be established, and that truth may prevail. To these, solid, general principles, after so much as has been said in defence of the Catholic cause in this and the former Essay, will, I flatter myself, be satisfactory, and such, I apprehend are the two afore-settled, Apostolical Tradition and Church Authority, or Ecclesiastical Tradition; since all the lesser controversies are to be brought to these tests. St. Paul expressly recommends to his disciples, the Thessalonians, the first of these, when he wrote to them *to stand fast, and to hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word or epistle.* 2 Theff. xi. 13. And of old, the people of Israel were directed to the same guide, *Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee,* Deut. xxxii. 7. Our Blessed Lord as peremptorily enjoins our submission to Church Authority, when he said, *He that hears you hears me; he that despises you*
despises

despises me, Luke x. 16. Under the first head, besides the traditions heretofore mentioned, *viz.* Infant Baptism, the manner of administering it, Transferring the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, and others, the Reformers themselves have come into; there are also to be reckoned, the administration of the rest of the Sacraments; the use of the Sign of the Cross, the several ceremonies used by the Church in her public service, Benedictions, Holy Water, and the rest; which having no known origin, must be reputed to be derived from the Apostles themselves. Of the second sort are Ecclesiastical Laws and Ordinances; the Fasts and Feasts; Celibacy of Priests; the Liturgy in an unknown tongue: In a word, the whole Church discipline. For all these points being strictly of that nature, *viz.* mere matters of discipline; the whole difficulty relating thereto is resolved into this single question, Whether the Church has a discretionary power or no to alter her discipline? And whereas CHRIST himself has decided the question past any doubt, by enjoining us, as we have heard before, an unlimited obedience to his Church, under the penalty of being reputed as Heathens or Publicans: And as tradition stands equally supported by the same Divine Authority; an humble heart and docile mind can have no reluctance to take up with these guides, the Church, I say, and Apostolic tradition; nor of subscribing to what they dictate to us: and unless we are to trust to them, we must be groping in the dark, unsettled in faith, undisciplined, and in a state of anarchy and confusion.

BUT still, in order to remove every handle, captious spirits may be ready to lay hold of, to traduce the Church's discipline, there remains yet one elucidation to be made of this matter; and with this I will put an end to any further trespass on my Reader's patience. What I beg leave to observe is, That under the notion of Church discipline, and of tradition, whether Apostolic
or

or Ecclesiastical, we don't mean to comprehend the peculiar practices of devotion of particular countries and people; and therefore as they are not to be deemed terms of Communion, whether judged by our adversaries blameable in themselves or no, the faithful in general are no way concerned in them, nor are we obliged to become their advocates. Nevertheless, while Protestant travellers, and on their credit Protestant writers do generally give a partial and unfair relation of these customs, either in the people's wrong, of whose practices they treat, by misrepresenting them, or in the whole Catholic Church's wrong, by misapplying them, when they charge them to her account; I can't forbear entering so far into the matter as to do common justice, by distinguishing truth from falsehood. To make a research into every particular practice of devotion of every nation, sifted out and burlesqued by our adversaries, would be an endless task; and I conceive also a needless one, when their merit can be determined a nearer way; and the following few *postulatums* or suppositions will, I hope, entirely answer this end.

1st, I presume to suppose, howsoever extotical the pious practices of some people may appear to many, that they do not intrench upon the purity of our holy faith; and the grounds of this supposition are, That every Catholic country and nation professes the same articles of Faith, throughout the whole Church; the same Sacraments and the same terms of Communion in every respect; have Catechisms setting them forth, in substance and equivalently the same; and have their respective Pastors to expound them: So that if any national practices were to be observed to deviate from the purity and integrity of the Catholic Faith, we dare be positive that they would receive an immediate check from their Ecclesiastical Governours, as watchful over the peoples spiritual welfare, as they are jealous

of any thing that can tend to disturb the order of the Church's discipline, or encroach on the orthodoxy of her faith.

I SUPPOSE, 2dly, That each country has it's peculiar genius, manners, and customs, which it would be as unreasonable for one nation to censure in another, as for a white man to condemn a negroe, or a negroe a white, for the opposition in their complexion. This different turn of genius is discovered in political and civil matters as well as in religious; and even in the daily occurrences of life, and our common deportment. An Englishman, for example, will bear to hear a piece of oratory delivered from the pulpit, or at the bar, without the motion even of a finger to enliven it: action he looks upon, in these circumstances, to be levity, quite theatrical, derogating from the awfulness of the place, and the gravity of the subject; whereas a Frenchman or an Italian will think the most elaborate discourse, stripped of the ornament of action, insipid and languid; and the Roman orator, among the qualifications he requires towards forming a perfect orator, makes action the principal ingredient: yet each way of speaking being adapted to the genius and humour of the several nations, each nation has a right to pursue it's own method, without being liable to blame or censure: and so in national customs and fashions; one nation has no reason to ridicule the fashions of the other. The same I presume to be the case in many national religious customs; what may appear odd to us, yet being accommodated to the genius of another people, so long as they don't entrench on faith, there is no room to find fault with them.

I SUPPOSE, 3dly, That we are all of us in a greater or less degree affected from material images; as a play strikes us more, when enlivened with the ornament of action on a theatre, and the aid of scenes and machinery, than when read in our closet; and the more gross a person's

person's understanding is, the greater impression does he receive from dumb representations, as is visible in children. From hence I beg leave to infer, that Imagery, and material representations convey a livelier idea of the mysteries of our faith to peasants and illiterate people than the most explanative discourse. And the devotion of a simple old woman is often raised to a higher pitch, and more inflamed, from these material images, and sensible objects, than that of the learnedest Divine from the most refined speculations; and therefore, while we see Almighty God operating by his Grace on weak vessels, thro' these means, it becomes an assured token that he is not displeased with their being made use of. When the great King David, in the height of his glory, being fired with the zeal of the Lord, disdained not to mix himself with the rude populace, dancing and playing on his harp before the Ark of the Testament; Michol his wife judging of this act as a squeamish Reformer would now, reviled her husband for debasing his royal dignity; but it appeared differently to the eyes of the Almighty: David's pious folly, as some may think of it, deserved to meet with the Divine approbation, and Michol's rash scornfulness with the curse of barrenness. Thus tho' several processions and other solemnities of devotion, seen in Catholic countries, are not according to the humour of the Reformation, and therefore by it's abettors looked on no otherwise than as a superstitious pageantry, yet being well intended, and rightly directed, we presume to think to be not only not displeasing to Almighty God, but greatly acceptable. It is no doubt the heart God principally regards, and the interior homage of our wills, which is the soul of our actions: yet from the whole form of the Jewish public worship prescribed by Almighty God himself, it manifestly appears, that he is not averse to outward pomp and solemnity.

BUT after all; whatsoever dislike our squeamish Reformers may affect to conceive against the peculiar practice,

practices of devotion of particular countries, they not being, as I said before, terms of a Catholic Communion, there can be no more justice in charging them to the Catholics of another country, much less in making the Church accountable for them, than for a geographer, describing the manners of countries and people, to impute French levity and loquacity to the Spaniard, or Spanish stiffness to the French; national customs and manners, whether civil or religious, fall to each nation's own account; their neighbours are unconcerned in them, nor the Church any further than to provide that the purity of her faith be not hurt by them; and that they do not degenerate into criminal or superstitious excesses and abuses: Therefore, with regard to Church regulations and practices, 'tis only her universal discipline we espouse; Traditions Apostolic and Ecclesiastical we profess a submission to; and the Church alone, in her Pastors, we acknowledge ourselves bound to obey: in obeying whom we are sure that we obey CHRIST; and that in resisting her, or in entertaining a contempt of her ordinances, we condemn CHRIST himself, who has said, *He that bears you, bears me; he that despises you, despises me*, Luke x. 16.





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